



1989

## The Chicago Principals' Club: 1899-1935

Edward H. Paetsch  
*Loyola University Chicago*

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THE CHICAGO PRINCIPALS' CLUB: 1899-1935

By

Edward H. Paetsch

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

January

1989

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer is grateful for the support, encouragement and patience received from his wife, Kristin, and his family and friends throughout the period of his doctoral studies.

A study of this nature cannot be accomplished without the cooperation and assistance of many people. Special appreciation is extended to Justine Spiegl at the Chicago Principals' Association for her assistance.

Sincere appreciation is extended to my director, Rev. F. Michael Perko S.J. for his support, guidance and understanding throughout the doctoral program. Gratitude is expressed to Dr. Joan Smith and Dr. Max Bailey for their encouragement and suggestions as well.

## VITA

The doctoral candidate, Edward H. Paetsch, is the son of Edward and Henrietta Paetsch. He was born on 29 August 1938 in Chicago, Illinois.

His elementary and secondary education was obtained in the public schools of Chicago, Illinois. He received a Bachelor of Science degree from Chicago Teachers' College and a Master of Science degree in Counseling and Guidance from Chicago State University in 1964.

In January 1961 he began his teaching career at the elementary level in the public schools of Chicago, Illinois. In July of 1974, he was awarded a Principal's Certificate from the Chicago Public Schools. In October of 1977 he was employed as a principal at the elementary level in the Chicago schools. Employment with the Chicago Board of Education as a principal continued until the present time.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

In the closing years of the 1890s, an organization was formed whose membership was composed of principals of the Chicago school system. This organization, known as the Chicago Principals' Club, was one of the first groups of employees of the Chicago Public Schools to unite for a common cause. The principals who formed the club saw the organization as a way to provide social activities for its members and as a means to render service to the cause of education in Chicago. The first president of the club insisted that the principals should have an organization that would make it possible for them to work as a unit for the welfare of the children of the city of Chicago.

This history of the Chicago Principals' Club is unique as it is tied to the history and development of the conflicts in Chicago's development as a city. It is clear that the club went through many distinct periods of change and growth between 1899 and 1935. It is also clear that there were influences that affected the activities, actions and development of the club that were from within and



outside of the club and the Chicago school system. The history of the Chicago Principals' Club can be used as a mirror to reflect the development of the Chicago school system and the forces which shaped that development. The same social, economic and political ideas and problems which impacted upon the Chicago schools, certainly had an affect upon the Club. It is this mirror that we must use to understand the history of the Chicago Principals' Club. An understanding of the development of the Club will lead us to an understanding of the broader picture of the educational history of the Chicago schools.

In the history of any organization, there are certain leaders who distinguish themselves by making contributions that dramatically change that organization. The Chicago Principals' Club is no different in this respect than any other organization. Homer Bevans, Rose Pesta and Aaron Klien were leaders of the club and responded to situations that dramatically altered the club. They also effectively responded to changes in the Chicago schools. It is these three leaders who brought a professionalism to the position of principal. There were social, political and economic events which influenced the history of the Chicago schools and the leaders of the club. The history of the educational system of the Chicago Public Schools is a history of a system that is characterized by struggle, confrontation and compromise. Involved in the struggle were the immigrants who came to Chicago to obtain work and viewed education as a

means to improve their lives and the lives of their children. The immigrants' struggle was with the business leaders of Chicago who wanted the educational system to provide efficient factory workers at as little cost as possible. The confrontations occurred when the new citizens turned to organized labor to obtain their goals found and these goals to be opposed by the business interests of the city. The compromises that were realized to resolve these struggles, had to be implemented by the Chicago Board of Education. The last, and perhaps the most unpredictable, of the forces that influenced the public schools were the political structures that operated both from within and from outside of the city.

In the final analysis, it became the task of the principal of each individual school to provide an education for each child. For the most part principals were not concerned about the different goals that were established for the educational system by labor and business interests. Neither were the principals interested in the political process that was and is so great a part of the Chicago school system. It was the principal who was the key to the educational program of each school as their focus was on the educational process. The principals of Chicago and the Chicago Principals' Club both have a history of development as individuals and as a group. The chronicles of the Chicago Principals' Club is a history of the struggle of this group of leaders to assert control over their

profession and the educational system of Chicago. To understand the as individuals and their club it is imperative to understand the forces that impacted the educational system and the struggles of the city of Chicago.

Chicago was a unique city as it was both the center of a national railway network and located in the center of an inland waterway. It quickly became the financial and merchandising center of the Midwest. As a result of these two factors, the city developed powerful business organizations that were able to command a great deal of political influence and used it to meet their objectives.

The expansion of Chicago's industries demanded a large work force and immigrants by the thousands met that need. Those who came to Chicago were an extremely heterogeneous group of people. There were language, religious and social barriers among the immigrants and this caused them to settle in groups or neighborhoods where they found their own kind. This checkerboard pattern made it difficult for the politicians to create one unified political machine. In addition, the conflicts between labor and business created problems for the school system that make it difficult to educate the children.

Some of the principals who ran the Chicago schools were among the groups of immigrants who came to this country. Some of them or their parents had immigrated to Chicago in hopes of finding a better way of life. They brought with them a European work ethic and a mentality that

was necessary to succeed in the Chicago schools. It might have been this same mentality that was the very reason for the Principals' Club never to realize any power when dealing with the political realities of education in Chicago. It was these same immigrant group of principals who organized themselves into the Chicago Principals' Club and who thought the main function of the club was to provide a social outlet for the principals and then to improve their profession. It was later to be proven that the first of these objectives was achieved with ease. But the second objective was not so easily accomplished.

The Principals' Club grew at an erratic rate as is sometimes the case with new organizations. The membership reached its maximum in 1933 and was composed of both the elementary and high school principals. The early activities of the club centered around the social activities and with the sharing of ideas among the principals that would improve the position of principal.

As the city and the schools changed, the members of the club saw the need to establish a strong centralized organization that could address common educational issues and speak for the principals as a group. It was determined that one united loud voice would be better than three hundred separate voices that spoke individually.

The relationship between the principals and the general superintendent of schools varied with each superintendent's view of the role of the principals and

their organization. At times the superintendents dominated the principals and sought complete compliance with their directives. Other superintendents involved the principals in the decision making process and sought their council. What other the management style, the superintendent of schools could generally count on the complete support of the principals. Even when the Principals' Club attempted to take legal action to preserve their jobs in the budget reductions of 1934, their fight was with the actions of the board of education and not the general superintendent.

The club members realized that to improve their position they would have to become involved in the legislative process and attempt to influence state and local politicians. They met with a few successes but these were not nearly equal to the number of failures.

The greatest concern of the principals was the task of how to improve instruction and the skills of being a principal. The club's own organizational structure included a committee structure which addressed both of these concerns. The principals shared their knowledge by publishing a journal of their finding in a monthly publication that was viewed by other educational organizatriuons as professional.

As the club membership grew, so did the need for a person who could devote full time to the needs of the principals. The addition of this person brought a new dimension to the club's activities. Representation at

meetings gave the principals first hand information and a means to express their opinions directly to the people involved in the decision making process.

The principals did not consider themselves to be a part of the labor movement. The principals viewed their position as a profession rather than a job. The principals were also keenly aware of the fact that retention in their positions was dependent upon the good graces of the members of the board of education. Actions by the principals, which were not looked upon with favor by the board members, could certainly lead to a principal losing his job. The teachers, however, were desperately involved with the labor movement and became a formidable power. The board of education was acutely aware of this power and went to great lengths to curtail it. The principals did not realize that there was a need to join the organized labor movement until after actions taken by the board almost destroyed the educational services of the schools and eliminated one half of the principals of Chicago.

The political powers of Chicago regarded the board of education budget and the many jobs within that budget as their own personal tree whose ripe fruit had to be picked with great regularity. There was never any hesitation on the part of politicians to assert their authority and to make decisions that were completely based on the premise of increasing their own power base and political influence. In spite of all of these obstacles the educational system of

Chicago and the Chicago Principals' Club survived. The club did become a part of the system that influenced educational progress in Chicago and was a part of the struggle and the compromise of the Chicago schools.

An evaluation of the history of the Chicago Principals' Club can be accomplished by reviewing two distinct areas of concern. We must first evaluate the club's development and growth as an organization in light of the objectives it desired to achieve. Secondly, we must evaluate what effect the club had on the educational system of the Chicago schools. The completion of these two objectives will lead us to an understanding of the history of the Chicago Principals' Club.

## CHAPTER TWO

### EDUCATION AND PRINCIPALS

On 28 October 1899, a group of Chicago principals organized the Chicago Principals' Club. The principals of Chicago were one of the first groups of employees of the Chicago Board of Education to organize and to attempt to establish an identity as a unified labor organization. The Chicago Principals' Club was eventually to become the Chicago Principals' Association, Local Two, American Federation of School Administrators, American Federation of Labor.

The Chicago Principals' Club, like other labor movements, developed its own political traditions and self identity. The leaders of the Principals' Club made adjustments to the political system of Chicago even as that political system was influenced by the Chicago Principals' Club. Any city's politics are often changed by forces beyond the control of any sets of individuals or groups within the city. Chicago and the Chicago Principals' Club were no exceptions to this generalization. The club's identity and actions were greatly influenced by Chicago



politics and the motives and actions of political and social leaders of the time.

To understand the development of the Chicago Principals' Club, we must understand the development of the Chicago Public Schools and appreciate the political, social and economic issues which influenced that development. The history of the Chicago Principals' Club will be related and interpreted from this perspective. This account cannot be accurately related or interpreted without including factors from both inside and outside of the Principals' Club which influenced decisions and actions of the organization. It is this approach that will be used to relate the development of the Chicago Principals' Club and the times that impacted on it.

#### CHICAGO'S FIRST SCHOOLS

On 10 August 1833, twenty-eight voters of the Chicago settlement approved the incorporation of Chicago as a town. In October 1833, a petition signed by ninety-five voters was presented to the new town government, asked that that a square mile of town property be sold at auction and the funds that were received be used to create a school fund. A total of \$38,619.74 was raised by that auction.<sup>1</sup> The land that was sold was a gift from the federal government. Congress had stipulated in the Ordinance of 1785, that surveyors must mark off one square mile of land to be set

aside for schools. Chicago's land had been kept intact and provided a fund for the support of the town's schools. According to Illinois law, income from school lands was to be divided between schools of the township according to the number of children in the school and the number of days children attended school. There was no further income for the schools except that parents were requested to pay \$2.00 per quarter. Few people paid this fee. All of the expenses to operate the schools came from these two funds. The funding for the Chicago schools was soon to be influenced by a national economic development.<sup>2</sup>

In 1837 a nationwide depression burst the land speculation bubble and interest from the school fund evaporated. A Chicago teacher wrote that "the great school fund, for which Chicago had been so celebrated, is all loaned out, and can not now command enough interest to support even one district school."<sup>3</sup>

The Chicago schools experienced other changes than those created by the depression. That same year, in recognition of the growth of the city of Chicago, the state gave the city a new charter. This new charter gave the city council some authority and responsibility for the public schools. The school agent, formally called the county commissioner of school lands, was to make a report to the city council of the exact state of the school fund. Also, a formal organization of the schools, under the direction of seven unpaid school inspectors, to be appointed by the city

council was established. The responsibilities of the school inspectors were to select books, determine the fitness of teachers, provide buildings and visit them. The division of money among the schools was also their responsibility.<sup>4</sup> This new law also provided for each school district to select three trustees who would be responsible for seeing that children in their district could attend school and would actually hire teachers. The trustees could also levy a school tax in the district of up to one-half of one per cent of the value of the property in that district. There was however, no penalty for not paying the tax. As a result, no one paid the tax.

Chicago government extended its control over the schools by an act of the Illinois legislature. This act amended the city charter in 1839 and gave to the city council the right to appoint the trustees and the school inspectors. The city council was also given the right to prescribe the course of study and choose textbooks. However, the council did not exercise these rights and in 1841, turned all such matters over to the school inspectors; the right to control all school contracts, now becoming large enough to be particularly useful, was held tight by the council.

In 1842, the economy began to rebound from the depression and Chicago experienced an explosion of production, population and growth. These factors had little effect on the schools except to intensify the existing

problems. Even with additional help from the city council and aid from the state, the financial situation of the schools failed to improve. The number of children enrolled increased at least as fast as all school incomes. What were the teaching conditions in Chicago during these dramatic times and how did they change as the Chicago schools developed?<sup>5</sup>

### TEACHING IN CHICAGO

Teaching in Chicago between 1834 and 1854 was difficult, if not impossible. All teachers were to maintain order and then to impart knowledge. The average number of children per teacher ranged between eighty and one hundred. As the number of children increased, the first objective of the teacher became more difficult and the second objective became impossible. This situation became even more impossible for a constantly changing succession of untrained teachers. Only two private academies undertook the responsibility of teacher training in 1833 and both were in Massachusetts. There were no teacher training institutions in Illinois that were funded by public money and none in Chicago until 1856.<sup>6</sup>

In 1845, the first school building was erected by the city of Chicago. It was reported that an editorial in the Chicago Tribune stated that, "the school would never be needed and ought to be used as an insane asylum and that the

first inmates should be the members of the board of education."<sup>7</sup>

Teaching conditions at the Dearborn School, one of the first schools built by the city, were terrible and reflected the lack of commitment to the education of its young and by the citizens of Chicago. The school was two stories high. On each floor was one large room and four resitation rooms, one at each corner of the floor. There were 350 pupils on the lower floor and 250 pupils on the second floor.<sup>8</sup> Resitations were not heard on the first floor. There was an "order teacher" who had charge of each floor and had nothing to do with the teaching process. The eighth grade pupils were seated in the center of the large room on the second floor and were taught by the principal and the assistant principal. There were an additional 100 students in the attic on the third floor. This room was known as the "sky parlor." Each floor was connected by one narrow stairway. The washrooms were out of doors and behind the school.

Pupils were admitted to the high school department at the end of each school year. Promotion was based upon the successful completion of an examination. The examinations were held in the high school buildings and students were allowed to take the examination only on the recommendation of the elementary school principal.<sup>9</sup> It was considered a disgrace for a school and its principal to have a child fail this examination. Changes in the educational system in Chicago were needed and they were made during the next

several years.

### THE FIRST SUPERINTENDENTS

By 1854, the Chicago schools had been open for twenty years. The schools had always been an after thought for most of the citizens of Chicago, but, new plans were developing for the schools. In 1853, the city council, had authorized the employment of a superintendent of schools who would serve as a secretary to the school inspectors and bring unity and order to the school district.

The first superintendent of schools, John Dore, had no authority over his thirty-four teachers and three thousand students when he was employed in 1854. The ungraded schools in each district were completely independent of each other in curriculum, books, procedures and methods of teaching. Principals were the only judges and authorities over all educational matters. Each school was an island and not related to any other school.

William Wells succeeded John Dore as superintendent. It is apparent that Wells was a remarkable man in the early history of the public education in Chicago. Wells was able to transcend the checks and balances of the economic and political forces which actually controlled the Chicago schools.<sup>10</sup> The most noteworthy accomplishment of Wells was the grading of the entire school population and the preparation of a completely graded curriculum. In the midst

of growth and change in both the city and the schools, an event was to about take place that was to devastate each citizen and institution of the city.

### THE GREAT CHICAGO FIRE

In October 1871, a great tragedy occurred that destroyed the city and its schools. The great Chicago fire left thirty-five thousand people completely without food or shelter. Fifteen school buildings were completely destroyed. The leveled school buildings were not to be replaced for three years and no new ones were built. All city, county and school records were destroyed. The schools still standing were used to shelter the homeless. The high school buildings housed the courts for a year. The city high schools were not reopened until 1874.

The ten years following the fire were difficult for the Chicago schools in many ways. The 1870 state constitution stated that "the general assembly shall provide a thorough and efficient system of free schools to all of the children of the state."<sup>11</sup> However, the state failed to provide any additional funding or means of funding to accomplish this end.

The Chicago school superintendent had no clear cut decision-making authority in any situation. If he attempted to exercise authority, he collided with the vested interests within the schools, within the board of education or from

outside the school system. The schools were governed and teachers were appointed or dismissed by committees of the board of education. This seems to indicate that most of the decisions on matters under their jurisdiction were made without reference to the board of education as a whole. There were seventy-nine committees of the board of education in 1885.<sup>12</sup>

There were several important trends in public education between 1865 and 1900 in Chicago. The first trend dealt with the response to demands from the ethnic groups for change in the curriculum. Another trend dealt with the idea that books were not the only things about which the schools should be concerned. Still another trend was the demand for child labor laws and compulsory education. This last trend was both at the local and national level.

The industrial revolution brought about a change in the curriculum of the Chicago schools. Emphasis was placed on manual training and thus a shift in educational needs gave rise to vocational education. More skills were being required in industrial production and only the public schools could provide these skills on such a large scale. The teaching of manual skills in Chicago was a departure from accepted educational theory. Educators had little enthusiasm for this change. The General Superintendent of Chicago Public Schools was upset at the dropping of Greek from the high school curriculum. However, industrial leaders and business leaders gave private financial support



for practical education.

Pressure from the immigration population brought about additional changes during the 1880s. By 1850, 52 percent of the population of Chicago had been born outside of the United States. The census of 1890 showed 40.9 per cent of the cities population was foreign born and 37 per cent were the children of foreign born parents.<sup>13</sup> Almost all of the ethnic groups had their own social or religious organizations. Some groups had both. Each of the ethnic and religious groups held tight to their own European based beliefs. Groups that were already assimilated into the American patchwork were hostile toward all of the recent immigrants. Both religious and ethnic prejudices played a significant part in Chicago political and educational development. Many of the children were working in the factories, kept at home or were out in the streets.

In 1853, the Illinois General Assembly passed the first compulsory education law in the history of the state. All children between eight and fourteen were required to attend school for at least twelve weeks in any year. This law was not enforced anywhere within the state.

The effort to enforce compulsory education was strengthened very little in 1891 by the passage of the first general state child labor law. Children under the age of thirteen were prohibited from employment. The law had little effect on child labor and its enforcement was minimal.

In the closing years of the nineteenth century, the Chicago Public Schools clearly needed guidance and a new direction for coping with their vastly increased student body and the growing need for a responsible and effective administrative system. A commission established by Mayor Carter Harrison was to devise a plan for an administrative reorganization. William Rainey Harper, President of the University of Chicago, was named as its chairman.

The report of the Harper Committee issued in 1899, reflected the general national elite consensus on the direction that school districts should take. For years to come, the Harper Commission recommendations were the basis for efforts to reorganize the Chicago school system. The commission recommended that the power of the superintendent be greatly increased and that school boards be made much smaller.<sup>14</sup> This emphasis on small selective school boards was in accord with a national trend toward smaller school boards. David Tyack cites figures demonstrating that in 1893, there was an average of 21.5 school board members per city in the twenty-eight largest cities of the country. By 1913, the average number had fallen to 10.2 board members per city.<sup>15</sup>

Similarly, the Harper Commission's recommendation on strengthening the general superintendent's powers reflected a national movement toward governance of the schools by the "experts."<sup>16</sup> It was stated that the superintendent is "enjoyed as an expert, just as a physician is, and in the

long range of work, in which he is employed, he is independent of dictation."<sup>17</sup> This position was supported by the core of school administrators who maintained that they were engaged in a profession based on scientific principles.

The stress on the scientific nature of school management encouraged the development of the top down, centralized direction of schools, comparable to the burteaucratic model for the nonpolitical control of the nation's cities. Both situations justified the attempted or actual restructuring of school and city governments to limit popular participation.<sup>18</sup> After 1898, the relationship between boards of education, the general superintendent of schools and teacher groups would dominate the educational world for the next several decades. Most of the dramatic movements in the schools after 1899, were the results of the relationships of these three groups. Similarly, the relationship of the principal to these three groups and to the Principal's Club created can only be understood when the nature of the development of the position of principal is understood.

One of the first groups of employees of the Chicago Board of Education to organize was the principals. The reason for this organization were twofold. The social aspects of such a union were very attractive to the principals and this organization could also provide an opportunity for principals to unite and provided an avenue to pursue professional growth within the position and the

school system.

### THE PRINCIPALSHIP DEVELOPS

The position of principal has undergone many changes in its development. This development, both locally and throughout the country, has had common elements. However, the principalship in Chicago has developed in a unique manner that reflects the economic and political conditions of the city of Chicago.

The influence of teaching duties on the principalship was limited chiefly to the early stages of its development. The term, "principal teacher" was a common designation for the controlling head of a school in the early reports of school boards, indicating that teaching was the chief study of this person. The term "principal" however, appears in the common school report of Cincinnati as early as 1833.<sup>19</sup> Horace Mann referred to a "male principal" in his annual report in 1841.<sup>20</sup>

The duties and responsibilities of a principal can best be understood as outlined by the Cincinnati Board of Education in 1839. The principal was, "to function as the head of the school charged to his care, to regulate the classes and course of instruction of all the pupils, whether they occupied his room or the rooms of other teachers." As an afterthought to this definition of the principalship, the Cincinnati Board of Education further charged the principal

with the task of "safeguarding the school house and to keep it clean." This same board report further pointed out that principal teachers were selected "on account of their knowledge of teaching methods, characteristics of children and common problems of schools."<sup>21</sup>

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the principalship in large cities had acquired certain outstanding characteristics. These characteristics were: (1) a teaching male principal as the controlling head of the school, (2) primary departments with women principals under the direction of the male principal, and (3) prescribed duties which were limited largely to the grading of pupils in the various rooms.<sup>22</sup> Two concepts destined to improve the position of the principalship were beginning to attain acceptance: the uniting of the departments under one principal and the freeing of the principal from teaching duties to supervise the work of all rooms in the school.<sup>23</sup>

The idea of a full-time principal was slow to be accepted in large cities in the country. In New York City, by 1867, the principal had no classroom and no particular classes or grades which he instructed or for whose progress and efficiency for which he was responsible. However, in Chicago, as late as 1881, the principals were still required to devote as much as one-half to one-quarter of their time each day to regular class instruction.<sup>24</sup>

Methods of selecting principals showed little refinement until after the advent of the city superintendent

of schools. Chicago, in 1854, had six principals, all of whom were men, but in 1870, board regulations permitted women to be principals of elementary schools having fewer than six hundred pupils. In 1873, Chicago has twenty men principals and nineteen women in the elementary school principalship.<sup>25</sup>

The agencies for the selection of the first principals were usually city officials or school inspectors appointed by them. School inspectors appointed by the council selected the first principal in 1844. It was well toward the close of the century before the selection of principals was based on the professional qualifications determined by the superintendents.<sup>26</sup>

Candidates for the principal's certificate in Chicago in 1868 were required to send their testimonials to the examining committee of the board of education when the examination was announced. The committee then invited only a select number to take the examination. In an examination held to fill a vacancy in a certain school, seventeen of more than fifty applicants were invited to write the examination. The subjects of that examination were orthography, definitions, arithmetic, English, language, literature, geography, history, natural science and some miscellaneous questions. None of the questions referred to the teaching procedures. Eight of the seventeen candidates were granted principal certificates. For several reasons, it became apparent to several of the Chicago principals that

it might be to their benefit for them to come together and to form a club that would have their interests as its prime concern. At the end of the nineteenth century this is exactly the action they undertook.<sup>27</sup>

#### THE CHICAGO PRINCIPALS' CLUB

There is doubt as to exactly how the Chicago Principals' Club began. A group of male principals met occasionally and later formed the John Howland Club. The female principals formed an organization known as the Ella Flagg Young Club. Mary Herrick suggests that these two groups combined and formed the Chicago Principals' Club. However, a description of the origin of the club in the journal of the Chicago Principals' Club makes no mention of either of these two organizations.

Like most ideas or movements, the real beginnings of the Chicago Principals' Club are somewhat uncertain. It is clear however, that from time-to-time, groups of principals did come together to discuss common problems and for social gatherings.<sup>28</sup> In the minds of these principals, there gradually developed the idea of the importance of having all of the principals, both men and women, working together as a unit for the welfare of the Chicago schools and giving the position of principal of a city school a standing and dignity worthy of the highest respect.<sup>29</sup>

On 28 October 1899, a group of Chicago public school

principals met at the Sherman House for the purpose of forming a principals' organization.<sup>30</sup> The principals' first act was to elect temporary officers to take charge of the meeting and to establish procedures for the conduct of that meeting and all subsequent meetings until a permanent organizational structure and officers could be elected. This temporary organization only lasted for two meetings. Homer Bevens, principal of the LaSalle School, was elected chairman; George Davis was elected secretary and Gerbrandus Osinga was made treasurer. An executive committee was established which consisted of the officers and four elected principals.<sup>31</sup> This organization was ratified and it was decided that the new organization was to be called the Chicago Principals' Club.

A standing committee of eleven members was established to organize the club. The committee was charged with the responsibility of finding a permanent place for the club to meet and to plan a meeting for 11 November 1899. This introductory meeting was scheduled to present a constitution and bylaws for approval and to invite all principals in the city to attend. Each principal paid one dollar to the club treasurer to be used for the club expenses with the understanding that the dollar would be counted toward any membership fee that was to be determined. A total of forty-two principals, all of those present, contributed the one dollar.<sup>32</sup>

On 11 November 1899 this first meeting of the Chicago



Principals' Club was held. A formal statement of the purpose of the club was presented to the assembled principals. The purpose of the club was the "unify and facilitate thought and action on educational questions and to improve the social and professional stature of the Chicago teachers and principals." The membership, at this meeting, approved a constitution and bylaws which were drafted by the executive committee.<sup>33</sup>

The constitution and the bylaws were brief and outlined an organization that was unencumbered with rules and procedures. The constitution established a central body and six district bodies. The central body, composed of officers and the executive board, had the powers to initiate and call meetings on all matters. Each district organization had the power to act in all matters that affected them and the responsibility of referring its decisions on all matters to the central body. The central body was to refer these individual actions to all other district organizations. It is apparent that the local districts were independent of the central authority and acted independently. The central body was placed in the position of distributing the actions of the districts to each other with no authority in local actions. The central body only met once a year while the districts met as they desired.

Membership in the club was limited to principals of the Chicago public schools who had paid their dues. Dues

were set at two dollars per year. One dollar was to be paid to the central body and one dollar was kept at the local level. It should be noted that membership in the club, in the final organizational structure, was limited to principals whereas the original intent of the organization was to allow teachers to join. It would seem that the principals decided to exclude teachers to make the organization more exclusive and more responsive to the specific needs of those principals.

There were four articles included in the bylaws. Two of these dealt with the procedures used during the formation of the club, one dealt with the elections of officers and the last established the fiscal year. The central body had only one scheduled meeting per year. This meeting was to be held in November, on the Saturday before Thanksgiving. At that meeting, ten members constituted a quorum. The executive committee did have the authority to call a meeting of central body if necessary.<sup>34</sup> The November meeting was also established as the time when the election of officers took place. Officers were elected by nomination with the greatest number of votes per nomination per office. Nominations could be made by letters written before the meeting or by people present at the meeting.

The election of the first permanent officers of the club was the final action at the November meeting. Homer Bevans was elected as president, George W. Davis was elected as secretary and George A. Osinga was elected as

treasurer.<sup>35</sup>

It was appropriate that Homer Bevans was elected as the president, because it was mainly through his efforts that the Principals' Club was organized. Bevans dreamed and preached of a dignified, influential and respected organization of principals.<sup>36</sup> Bevans observed that many of the wealthy people in Chicago lived on the many boulevards in the city. He equated wealth and power with the addresses on the boulevards. Thus the phrase most used by Bevans to describe what goals he saw for the new Club can best be described by his constant use of the phrase, "get a house on the boulevard."<sup>37</sup>

As a new century was entered, the Chicago Principals' Club was a reality. It was one of the first organizations of employees of the Chicago Board of Education to unite and to form what was later to become an administrative union. The course of events that took it from its simple origins to that point are wrapped in the economic, social and political life of Chicago.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### THE EARLY YEARS, 1900-1910

#### CHANGES IN THE CHICAGO BOARD OF EDUCATION

As the new century was ushered in, an era of enormous growth and development for American industry began. The principles of "scientific management" were introduced as a means of rationalizing the work process while forcing the maximum output from each individual worker. In the educational sphere, business leaders and progressive reformers sought ways of restructuring public school systems in the name of such goals. Business groups made repeated efforts to increase the power of the school superintendent as the professional agent and to reduce the strength of teacher organizations and boards of education.

The report of the Harper Commission reflected this new philosophy and laid down wide ranging recommendations that were the basis of efforts to reorganize the Chicago school system. The first attempt to accomplish these goals met with failure during the superintendency of E. Benjamin Andrews. According to Wrigley Andrews attempts to implement

a more centralized school system were hampered by his lack of tact and political ability.<sup>1</sup> Bills that were introduced in the state legislature were met by immediate political conflict and bitter debate and resulted in defeat for such legislation. Edwin G. Cooley was appointed Superintendent of Chicago schools in 1900 and succeeded in implementing some of the Harper Committee reforms that Andrews had failed to accomplish. From the beginnings of his tenure, Cooley engaged in a series of strategic and prolonged confrontations with the board of education and the teachers.

The changes made by Superintendent Cooley to improve schools and teaching were opposed by many teachers. The Chicago principals and their club did not actively express approval or disapproval as they were involved in some of the changes and the decisions to enact these changes. Cooley became convinced that the academic attainments of the Chicago teachers, particularly those in the elementary schools, were not equal to those of teachers in other large school systems.<sup>2</sup> Only a high school education had been required of applicants for teaching positions, and even that was not required of those teachers who had successfully taught elsewhere. In 1899, the normal school course of one year beyond high school, or its equivalent was required of beginning teachers. The teachers already in the profession remained with their lack of academic training.<sup>3</sup>

On 28 January 1907, the Chicago Board of Education developed a plan that required teachers to improve their



teaching skills by attending study courses. These classes were to be held during the regular teaching hours and principals were required to teach the classes of the teachers who were required to attend these classes. This additional teaching responsibility violated the boards own rules regarding the responsibilities of a principal. Principals were required to teach classes between 25 and 50 percent of their work day.

This new program brought a swift response from the principals' club. On 2 February 1907, the president of the club sent a letter to Emil W. Rittera, president of the Chicago Board of Education, and addressed the substitution issue. The principals agreed with the need to improve the quality of teaching and with the program to educate the teachers but took issue with them being required to spend additional time in substituting in the classrooms. The principals' club suggested that the classes be held after the regular working day. The club president cited twelve responsibilities of the principal which he felt would be disrupted if additional teaching time was imposed. It would seem that this list was the first attempt at writing a job description for the principalship by the club. The principals' club further requested that the Rules of the Chicago Board of Education, Section 209, page 20, which requires principals to teach a percentage of their day, be repealed. This attempt to make the position of principal full-time was ignored and was not to be considered again

until 1936. The principals' club further requested that principals would not be charged with the responsibility of this additional teaching. The letter ended, once again, with a pleading posture by stating that, "we wish to assure the board of education of our faithful cooperation in endeavoring to carry out this plan and shall give it our loyal support."<sup>4</sup> The board of education ignored the letter and the program continued as designed until the end of the Cooley administration.

Superintendent Cooley proposed and the board of education adopted two changes in policy which provoked bitter opposition from the teachers. Both of these policies addressed the issue of salary and teaching performance. After this policy was adopted, teachers were advanced from the lower salary group to the higher salary group if and when the principal rated them as efficient; the second policy stated that before efficient teachers could be advanced on the salary scale, they must show evidence of higher scholarship by passing a promotional examination or by completing a certain number of study courses at the college level.<sup>5</sup> The idea of salary linked to the efficiency and training of a teacher did not draw criticism from either the teachers or the principals. It would appear that this idea could not be attacked directly as it was designed to set higher standards for the profession. However, the Chicago Teachers Federation did attack the system of rating the teachers by the principals. In describing this process,

the federation used the term "secret marking system" to create the impression that the system was poor because it was secret.<sup>6</sup> This procedure of evaluation allowed the teacher or a member of the board of education to be the only ones to obtain the rating. The teacher could ask the principal of the school for the rating, and if the principal preferred not to tell her, she could learn the rating by asking the superintendent's office.<sup>7</sup> No one else could obtain this information. Individual teacher ratings were treated as confidential. The fact that the principals did not have to disclose the rating to the teachers did provide justification to the charges of a secret evaluation system and also provided for poor relations between the principal and the teachers.

This particular system of rating teachers, that was adopted by the board of education, was suggested by the general superintendent based upon recommendations to him by the Chicago principals. These recommendations were made by a committee of principals to the general superintendent. The principals based their recommendations on a system that was used in Chicago for about twenty years prior to its adoption.<sup>8</sup> It seems that this plan of teacher evaluation had undergone some changes over the years however, this marking system and promotion policy has been continued by successive superintendents up to the present with but a few changes in detail.

In 1900, the actual operational power of the school

system resided with the fourteen district superintendents. Each district superintendent was semi-independent and had absolute authority within his or her district to establish the course of study and the appointment of teachers. Cooley had the number of district superintendents reduced to six and moved them around. In effect, the district superintendents became agents of the general superintendent, rather than independent centers of authority. Cooley also established an administrative central office staff by appointing three assistant superintendents who were responsible directly to him. It was these three assistant superintendents who superseded the district superintendents in ultimate authority and thus began a central bureaucracy. The authority to appoint teachers came under the control of the superintendent. Prior to this time, the board of education established teacher appointment lists. Graft and favoritism were obvious faults of this procedure.

Superintendent Cooley also changed the operation of the board of education by insisting that the number of board committees be reduced. There were as many as seventy committees operating at one time. This number of committees obviously led to confusion and repetition of functions. Cooley had the number of committees reduced to four which were responsible for school management, buildings and grounds, finance and compulsory education. Edwin G. Cooley had successfully established a strong superintendency and an educational bureaucracy with him as the unquestioned

leader.<sup>9</sup>

In 1909, Cooley resigned as general superintendent. The board of education deliberated over six months to name a new superintendent. The choice that was finally made was a surprise to every faction of the Chicago education scene. In spite of its opposition to the unionization of teachers, the board appointed a superintendent who would antagonize most of businessmen on the board while strongly supporting the teachers.<sup>10</sup> Ella Flagg Young was appointed superintendent of Chicago schools. She was a student of John Dewey and was widely recognized as an excellent teacher and an outstanding administrator. Young was a teacher, principal, and assistant superintendent in the Chicago Public Schools.

Young was outspoken in her concern for children of immigrants who made up more than two-thirds of the Chicago public schools in 1909. Teachers who came to her lectures at the normal school listened to her as she warned against motivation based on competition with other children and warned against the use of sarcasm and punishment of a whole class based on the actions of a few students. Young maintained that the schools were the most powerful agent to bring all divergent groups together. "The public schools must be for the poor, the rich, native and immigrant, all faiths and races, all meeting on the common ground." she said. It is apparent that Young was trying to direct the Chicago school system to achieve the social ends of a greater opportunity for the children of Chicago.<sup>11</sup>

With Young as the general superintendent, a new philosophical direction was brought to the Chicago schools. She believed that school systems should be run in a democratic manner rather than an autocratic one. Young's views were appreciated by the teachers who has been in conflict with the autocratic manner of both Andrew and Cooley. The teachers had an ideology that emphasized a desire to make the school system more open. The teachers identified with the labor movement and with the goal of a liberal education for the children of the working classes. If the teachers were suppressed, it would be a threat to efforts to make the educational system responsible to the needs of the working classes.

The selection of Ella Flagg Young as superintendent of schools may have been based on a desire by the board of education to hire someone who had positive relations with the teachers federation and thus reduce the conflicts within the system.

The Chicago Principals' Club supported the choice of Young as General Superintendent as well as some of the business community.

#### THE CHICAGO TEACHERS FEDERATION

Teachers had been told for years that they were to be dedicated to the noble profession of teaching which was above such things a low pay, politics, and corruption. The

status given teachers in Europe may have influenced the European immigrants to encourage their children to be teachers and principals. However, the status in the United States for the teachers was much lower than that found in the European countries.

In March, 1897, a small group of teachers met at the Central Music Hall to discuss a pension problem.<sup>12</sup> From that meeting, the Chicago Teachers Federation was formed. By December more than half of all teachers in Chicago were members of the new organization.

The members of the federation were concerned about the teaching conditions in Chicago. High school teachers and principals were excluded from membership in the new organization. With the teachers federation making public pronouncements about the sad state of education in Chicago, a timid way of life ended and a vigorous and aggressive professionalism replaced it. This new voice of dissent alarmed many observers. One paper noted that the new teachers organization was "a spirit not credible to a high standard of professional ethics."<sup>13</sup>

An editorial in the American Teacher and School Board Journal of June, 1899 advised the organization to "seek to improve the work of the schools by improving the work done by its own members."<sup>14</sup> The Chicago Teachers Federation, under the direction of Catharine Groggin and Margaret Haley, developed into an organized and aggressively led group. This aggressiveness led the federation into the state

this address. These organization were Household Art Teachers, High School Teachers, Manual Training Teachers, School Masters' Club, Kindergarten Association and the Head Assistants. The Club moved to One Hundred Six West Harrison in 1921, to Sixty-four East Van Buren in 1924, to the City Club at Three Hundred Fifteen Plymouth Court in 1926 and in 1932 it moved into the Medical and Dental Arts Building at One Hundred Eighty-five North Wabash.

Membership in the club grew at a slow rate. High school principals viewed the club membership as limited to the principals of elementary schools and certainly not responsive to the needs of the high school principals. The high school principals also viewed the club as mainly addressing the problems of elementary principals as they constituted the vast majority of the membership and the principals in Chicago schools. The high school principals were paid more for their positions and were required to have more academic preparation for that position than elementary school principals. Status, qualifications, salary and unique needs were a problem for the high school principals to overcome before they could see a need to join the club. However, the Principals' Club did actively ask for the high school principals to join the organization. In a letter sent to all Chicago principals, the president of the club stated, "once more we appeal to every principal to forget differences and to stand for the solidarity of the club."<sup>15</sup> This appeal was ignored and it was not until 1924 that the



high school principals organized as one of the auxiliaries of the club. Until that time, the high school principals maintained a separate organization. As one club member said, "The first two or three years of the life of the club, its purpose to unify and facilitate thought and action of the principals was achieved with more or less success, though this period of time may be likened to the seed period of germination."<sup>16</sup> General meetings were held with more or less regularity with attendance of from fifty to one hundred members present at times. A membership list published in 1902 showed that seventy-two principals had paid their dues to the club.<sup>17</sup>

The office at the Schiller Building was too small for general meetings and they had to be held at the Masonic Temple. Among the many who addressed the meetings were Professor John Dewey, Jane Adams and Dwight L. Perkins.<sup>18</sup> Some of the subjects of these meetings were: "The Training of Teachers", "Courses of Study" and "Finance of the Public Schools."<sup>19</sup>

The first social efforts of the club took the form of banquets. These annual banquets were highlighted by speeches which stressed the idea of the benefits of unity with the Principals' Club. As one principal, Arthur D. Coddington observed, "These banquets provided the principals with many pleasant memories of communication of kindred souls and the formation of real friendships." Accurate records of these early banquets were not kept and the

indications of the educational ideas of the club became lost.<sup>20</sup>

The membership of the Chicago Principals' Club elected five presidents between the years 1899 and 1910. All of the presidents were men and all were principals of elementary schools. Homer Bevans was president from 1899 to 1903. James Armstrong was elected president in 1903 and served until 1904. Gerdandus A. Osinga was elected in 1904 and served through 1906. Of the club, Osinga said "The officers of the club had on their hands the slow and difficult task of winning over the general body of principals who were in the habit of going alone, unaccustomed to group action and dubious as to the benefits of an organization such as this."<sup>21</sup> Edward C. Rosseter became president in 1906. Membership during his administration increased to one 160.<sup>22</sup>

It was during Rosseter's last year in office that the club discussed the idea of the publication of a bulletin. It was not until one year later that a resolution was presented by Auxiliary Five asking for such a publication.

The board of directors of the club met on Saturday, 11 May 1911 and approved the publication of a bulletin which was to begin on 24 May 1911 and was to be named Chicago Principals' Club Reporter.<sup>23</sup> The Reporter was designed to keep principals informed of activities within and outside of the school system. The committee in charge of the publication was concerned that "the interests of the club demanded a medium of communication. Comparatively few

members can keep in touch with what is being done from moment to moment and yet it is important for the general interest of all members" was the rationale for this publication.<sup>24</sup>

In 1909 the first club directory was published. This first directory was entitled a "Membership Roster." This first roster included the names of the officers, the list of the standing committees, the constitution and bylaws and the names of the schools in alphabetical order in each of the six auxiliaries, then called districts. After the name of each school, the name of the principal and the school telephone numbers were listed. A yearly directory has been published from 1909 until 1988.

Several changes in the bylaws of the club took place at the annual meeting on 21 November 1910. Membership in the club was confined to those principals of the Chicago public schools whose written application was favorable accepted by two-thirds of the board of directors and membership could be terminated by death, separation from the service, or by a vote of two-thirds of the board of directors.<sup>25</sup> The position of corresponding secretary was added to the executive board. The annual dues were increased to ten dollars per year. The meeting ended with a resolution being passes which applauded the actions of the club to date and asked the principals "not to lower the present standard of our work for the school interests of the city and the state. We must widen our efforts and fields we

cover."<sup>26</sup>

There is little doubt that for the first nine years of its existence, the Chicago Principals' Club did not and would not take a position on any educational, political or social issue. This situation was best described by Dr. Guerin, a member of the board of education who characterized the principals as "rabbits ready to run at the slightest show of opposition or criticism."<sup>27</sup>

There are three reasons for this negative attitude of the principals toward their professional responsibilities. The first of these is that many of the principals were children of immigrant parents who viewed the position of teacher and principal with an immigrant mentality. That is to say, teachers and principals accepted a life of poverty, hard work and were dedicated to the profession. In return, the teachers expected to receive the respect of their students and parents and the self-satisfaction of their position.

The second cause was the change in the relationship between boards of education and the general superintendent. At the turn of the century, the superintendent of the Chicago schools became the seat of power. Around the personality of Edwin Cooley, who served as superintendent from 1900 until 1908, there raged, intermittently, some of the most bitter contests ever waged between a superintendent and his teaching force. The changes made at Cooley's insistence, to improve schools and teaching were opposed by

many teachers. The principals did not actively take sides, probably because they were intimidated by the personality and power of the superintendent.

The third factor, which caused the principals to develop a timid personality, was the nature of their appointment and the method of retention in the position. Principals were appointed by a recommendation of a member of the board of education and kept that position by a yearly vote of the board of education. The principals were thoroughly conscious of the fact that their annual election to the positions they held depended upon a thorough recognition of their relation to the board of education. The lack of any systematic procedure in the promotion of principals in the Chicago system, no doubt had checked the growth of a spirit of group unity. As a former principal in Chicago, Mr. Arthur D. Coddington said "Where the ambitious worker knows some other fellow worker, regardless of merit, service or leadership is given a position he thinks he deserves, the development of a real social spirit is extremely difficult."<sup>28</sup>

There were many instances which provoked the principals to reevaluate their position and change their attitudes and action. As one principal said, "It took many a shock to our sense of manhood and pedagogical responsibility to bring us to a realization of our rights."<sup>29</sup> When the Chicago Teachers Federation brought suit against the board of education in 1905 for salaries for

the two weeks that school closed, principals refused to join in the suit. The Principals' Club refused to join in the suit. The club felt that if the court decided that the board owes the teachers their salaries, the board would pay the principals for their two weeks of lost salary. "We are not going to be disloyal to our employer" stated the principals. The teachers won their case and were paid. The principals were not paid. Principals learned that only those who fight were rewarded and that their loyalty did not count.

#### THE PRINCIPALS' CLUB AND ELLA FLAGG YOUNG

In 1909, Superintendent Cooley resigned and the board of education set out to find a replacement. For the first time, the Chicago Principals' Club attempted to become involved in an important educational issue, the selection of a new general superintendent. There were three separate actions taken by the club to influence the selection process of a superintendent. However, each of these three actions was tempered with a degree of humility and a desire not to be viewed as dictating to the board of education.

The members of the Principals' Club felt that enough experiments had been tried in electing men from outside of the city to the position of superintendent. They believed that a principal or assistant superintendent, who has an intimate acquaintance with the Chicago school system, was

better qualified to perform the difficult task required of such an official than one who was unfamiliar with their particular problems. The Chicago Principals' Club undertook an effort to have a Chicago principal elected as superintendent.

A committee of three principals was chosen and called upon Mayor Busse to explain to him the reasons that a Chicago principal should be elected as superintendent of schools. The committee did not have the opportunity to speak to the mayor but were dismissed from his office with the assumption that they were going to have an appointment at a later time. The visit of the three principals to city hall was made known to the board of education and each member of the committee was docked a day's pay.<sup>30</sup>

On 8 March 1909, the Chicago Principals' Club sent a petition to the Chicago Board of Education requesting that a superintendent be selected from within the school system. On 22 March 1909, a letter was sent from the club to the board again asking for a person to be appointed from within the system. In that letter, the club suggested the names of James Armstrong, William Bartholf, Henry Cox, William Roberts and Ella Flagg Young for the position of superintendent.

While these attempts to influence the city officials failed in the eyes of those who thought school principals should mind their own business, it doubtlessly had some influence on members of the board of education who were

seeking an outsider with a national reputation. Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University was proposed at one time and Alderman Charles Merrian at another. The actions of the Principals' Club did call public attention to the desire of principals to secure a Chicago superintendent from within Chicago and did result with the choice of Ella Flagg Young.

With the superintendency of Young, a new and active Principals' Club began to develop. A new direction and activism had developed within one year. Many changes were about to take place within the organization and changes that were both of a positive and negative nature.



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## CHAPTER FOUR

### CHANGE AND CONFRONTATION, 1910-1920

The decade between 1910 and 1920 was a time which saw dramatic changes in both the educational system and community of Chicago. The Chicago Principals' Club expanded its organization and activities and became involved in the educational and political process of the Chicago schools. The first woman superintendent of schools became embattled in political controversy while still performing as an outstanding educational leader. The Chicago Board of Education tried to prohibit teachers from joining unions and fired teachers who joined the teachers federation. The mayors of Chicago openly used their power to change board of education policy or board members who did not follow their directives. A reorganization of the Chicago Board of Education took place in 1917 and teachers were given tenure in their teaching positions after a three years probation period. Change, but not without struggle and confrontation, had come to the Chicago educational community within this decade. A leader in this struggle and a point around which

educational change was to take place was the superintendent of the Chicago schools, Ella Flagg Young.

#### ELLA FLAGG YOUNG AND THE SCHOOLS

Ella Flagg Young made her greatest contribution to the Chicago schools by her efforts to give teachers pride in their participation and improvement of the schools. She sought to establish a sympathetic relationship with the teaching staff and to impart a sense of involvement in school policy. Mrs. Young was able to bring to reality a teachers council she envisioned in 1899 and had proposed in 1907. At the time the council was not recognized by the Chicago Board of Education but did meet at the call of the general superintendent. Members of the teachers federation felt that Mrs. Young was working with them toward a "strong, self-reliant and self-confident professional group of teachers."<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Young recognized the validity of many of the teachers federation requests for improved working conditions and improvements in the salary schedule. She recommended raises for the elementary teachers early in her administration. Principals and high school teachers felt she was more concerned about the elementary teacher than them by this action. Young asked the board to improve the

teachers pension fund and it did vote \$50,000 for this purpose.<sup>2</sup> Few major controversies marred Mrs. Young's first two years in the office of general superintendent.<sup>3</sup> Young worked to reduce class size and continued in her efforts to see that teachers were properly trained.

However, as she approached her third year, tensions between the board and herself mounted so that by 1913, Mrs. Young, in protest against a lack of cooperation by the board of education, resigned as general superintendent. According to Margaret Haley, a leader in the Chicago Teachers Federation, "Young refused to yield to the persistent demands of Jacob Loeb and other members of the board that she penalize teachers for what she concluded an exercise of their rights as citizens."<sup>4</sup>

On 26 July 1913, a special meeting of the Chicago Principals' Club was called by President Hogge. The meeting was called to determine the most effective action that had to be taken to deal with the resignation of Superintendent Young. In addition to the executive board, there were fifty-three principals present. The Principals' Club considered Young an effective superintendent. "Young had stood by the principals as no other superintendent" stated club President Hogge. A committee of five principals was appointed to frame a resolution in favor of Young being retained as general superintendent and a copy of the resolution was sent to the mayor and to each member of the board of education. The letter stated that "the Principals'

Club was unanimous in their request that the resignation of Ella Flagg Young not be accepted and that the interests of the schools would best be served with Young as superintendent." The Principals' Club joined in the flood of support for Young.<sup>5</sup>

Mayor Carter Harrison came under immediate pressure to use his influence to persuade the board of education to retain Young. Harrison, who was a supporter of Young, dismissed the board and appointed one which he thought would be more friendly to her. Young did withdraw her resignation and on 30 July 1913, and the board of education voted fourteen to one to ask Young to remain.<sup>6</sup> Young was then elected and remained as superintendent until December 1915.<sup>7</sup> Mrs. Young openly supported the teachers federation during hearings of the senate committee that was investigating the federation. She did not think that enormous classes, low pay and complete repression were ways to improve the quality of performance of elementary school teachers.

Young retained her post as general superintendent in the belief that she had been given a mandate that would allow her to regain some of the freedom of action she needed to complete her objectives. Young again resigned only five months later in December 1913. She resigned when the board split evenly on whether to elect her as superintendent.

The December resignation led to an even larger groundswell of protests against the board from Chicago citizens then had occurred the first time. Mayor Carter

Harrison issued a statement saying that he was sorry that the men he had appointed should have resorted to "underhanded methods to bring about Young's resignation."<sup>8</sup> On 13 December 1913, Young's supporters held a mass meeting which attracted several thousand people. Margaret Haley said she believed Young had been driven out by her refusal to bow to pressures to move against the Chicago Teachers Federation.<sup>9</sup> On 12 December 1913, a special meeting of the Chicago Principals' Club was called at eight in the evening by President Hogge. There were a large number of principals present at the meeting.<sup>10</sup> At this time, the principals were not united in their support for Young as superintendent. President Hogge cautioned the principals not to act in haste and recommended that a committee on resolutions be established to write down any resolutions and that he would lead in the discussions of each resolution. Five principals were appointed to this committee.<sup>11</sup>

The first resolution presented to the group extended appreciation to Young for her leadership and extended the principals best wishes for her future welfare. Members also felt that since the board of education had already hired John D. Shoop, her current assistant as the new superintendent, that the club should send a letter of support and loyalty to him. A second resolution was presented which expressed the fact that members of the club were appalled by the actions of the board and suggested that a letter be sent to them stating these feelings and

supporting Young.<sup>12</sup>

After considerable debate, the Chicago Principals' Club accepted the first resolution as the positions of the principals. A letter was sent the Mrs. Young on her retirement from the Chicago Public Schools expressing the principals regret at the severance of the personal and official relations that had existed since her election. The Principals' Club considered her many achievements and made a pledge of loyalty and affection to her. This letter was sent to Mrs. Young and to no other persons. A second letter of support was sent to the new superintendent, John Shoop.<sup>13</sup>

This action taken by the Principals' Club after the second resignation of Mrs. Young was directly opposite to the action taken just five months earlier. The cause for this change of support is difficult to determine. However, the fact that a new superintendent had already been named and the reluctance of the principals to offend the person who elected them to their position might have been a cause for the change of support. Even though the principals had acted as a group, it is evident from the minutes of the meeting that they were not all in agreement but acted out of a sense of unity for the club.

Once again, Mayor Harrison removed five board members who had voted against Young and the newly established board voted in Young's favor to reinstate her as the general superintendent. Ella Flagg Young returned to office and served two more years, from January 1914 to December 1915,



before retiring.

The relationship between Mrs. Young and the Mayor of Chicago changed in April 1915 when William Hale Thompson defeated Carter Harrison II. Young aroused the anger of Thompson when she publicly said that she could not obtain an answer from members of the board of education, who had been appointed by Thompson, about two dead men and teachers, long out of the teaching service who were being paid a total salary of \$24,000. Thompson then announced that he would have to approve the appointments of any principals in the schools.<sup>14</sup>

On 1 September 1915 the board of education met and passed a rule sponsored by board member Jacob Loeb. The new rule forbade "membership by teachers in organizations affiliated with a trade union or a federation or association of trade unions which have officers or other representatives who are not members of the teaching force."<sup>15</sup> Loeb did not include the Chicago Principals' Club but made it clear that the action was aimed at the teachers' federation. Both the Principals' Club and the Illinois State Teachers Association had paid employees affiliated with the Chicago Federation of Labor. It would seem that the members of the Chicago Board of Education did not perceive the two groups as threats to their position or authority. The bitterness between the teachers and the board had been brought about, Young concluded, by "class antagonism" when the teachers had brought corporate tax dodgers to book in their first great

victory, the hostility of the city's powerful vote against them was assured.<sup>16</sup>

On 13 September 1915, The Chicago federation called a meeting of its members to protest the Loeb rule and Ella Flagg Young was in attendance. On 23 September 1915 the federation obtained an injunction against the enforcement of the Loeb rule. Mayor Thompson announced his support for the rule even after the court ruled it arbitrary. Thompson said that the federation members were "lady sluggers and it was time to get to work on the three R's."<sup>17</sup> The Loeb rule was effectively stopped by the injunction. The board of education found other ways to retaliate against the federation. 27 June 1916 was the day when every teacher would be hired or dropped from employment for the next school year. The board members were presented with two lists of teachers. One list contained the names of all teachers employed in June 1916; the other was a typed list of seventy-one names which were to be voted on separately. Jacob Loeb had been elected president of the board. Sixty-eight teachers from this second list were terminated from employment with the Chicago schools. When asked the reason for failure to hire the teachers, Loeb said "You can not force me to give a reason for dismissal if I don't want to. I don't care to discuss each candidate."<sup>18</sup> All of the officers of the Chicago Teachers Federation and federation delegates to the Illinois State Federation of Labor were among the sixty-eight teachers fired. Once again the board

of education provided an example of the raw power it was capable of exerting. The courts were later to rule that "the board had the absolute right to employ or reemploy any applicant for any reason. The board is only responsible for its actions to the people of the city."<sup>19</sup> This situation of the absolute power of the board of education over the dismissal of teachers was about to undergo a change that would harness that power and establish rules and procedures for the hiring and firing of teachers. A member of the board of education, Ralph Otis had decided to draft legislation that would change the powers of boards of education that are still in effect today.

#### THE OTIS LAW

In January 1917, labor forces were getting ready to act in Springfield with legislation that would prevent the type of action taken by the board of education when they fired the sixty-eight teachers. Ralph Otis, a member of the Chicago Board of Education who had voted against the firing of the sixty-eight teachers, drafted legislation which would change the way the Chicago Board of Education would hire and fire its employees.

Three different bills to reorganize the structure and policies of the Chicago school system were introduced into the state legislature. The version written by Ralph Otis was passed and brought sweeping changes into the Chicago

system. The Otis Law provided for an eleven member board of education, which was appointed and not paid. The law gave the superintendent a four year term or contract but no authority over a business manager or attorney, who reported directly to the board. Teachers were given indefinite tenure after three years of probation with specific procedures for dismissal. The Otis Law, among several other items, mandated that a school budget should be prepared and that public hearings must be held to question that budget. Specific powers were outlined for the board of education and the superintendent. After the approval of the Otis Law, it appeared that the schools of Chicago would be in an era of peace and could concentrate on improving the services of the schools.

On 18 June 1917, to comply with the Otis Law, Mayor William Thompson appointed an entirely new school board. The city council approved the eleven names; but after a vote to reconsider the approval was passed, no action was taken to vote on approving them again.

The prior board went to court and claimed that since no board had been approved by the city council, that they were the legally appointed board of education. They indeed did prevail and were reinstated as the legal board on 20 June 1918. The Illinois State Supreme Court held that the new eleven member board had not been legally approved by the city council the second time. This board served until 27 May 1919 when a new board was appointed using the procedures

set forth in the Otis Law.

On 12 March 1919, the board of education authorized the high school teachers to form a council.<sup>20</sup> On 31 August 1921 the board passed procedures dated that all councils be set up on school time and that it was mandatory for the superintendent to call the councils together at regular intervals.<sup>21</sup> Thirty-nine different teacher groups were organized. A central council was elected and met with the general superintendent every five weeks. Teachers finally were able to express their ideas about the educational process in which they were involved. The Chicago principals and the Chicago Principals' Club were also involved in the changed that affected the educational structure of the Chicago schools and changes that occurred as the club itself developed. The activities of the club would reach into the City Council of Chicago and the Illinois General Assembly.

#### THE PRINCIPALS' CLUB DEVELOPS A NEW ORGANIZATION

There were five presidents of the Chicago Principals' Club between the year of 1910 and 1920. Avon S. Hall was elected in 1910 and served until 1912. In 1912, Morgan G. Hogge was elected and would serve in that office until 1915.

John J. Stube was president during the years from 1915 until 1917. He relinquished that office to C.E. Debutts and he served until 1918. The final president of the decade was Chester C. Dodge. He served until 1920. All of these men

were principals of elementary schools whose membership was six hundred or more.

The first woman to become president of the Chicago Principals' Club was Rose Pesta and her election did not occur until 1923. Even though women had been members of the Executive Board of the Principals' Club since 1905. Harriet N. Winchell was elected to the position of Corresponding Secretary in that year and at least one woman had been on the Executive Board continuously from 1905 until the 1923. Rose Pesta was the only woman to be elected to the position of president from the organization of the club in 1899 through to 1935. The fact that females were not chosen to be principals of Chicago Public Schools could possibly explain this situation.

As the need arose, other positions were created on the executive board of the club. In 1911, the position of first, second and third vice-president were created. In 1912, the responsibilities of secretary were divided and the positions of recording and corresponding secretary were created. The club, when in need of legal advice, would seek it by hiring an attorney for a specific situation. This procedure is still in effect today.

The organizational structure of the Chicago Principals' Club changed on 24 September 1910. The meetings of the central governing board or the board of directors, which had been meeting once a year, now met on a monthly basis. These monthly meetings were scheduled on the third

Saturday of the month at the club offices.<sup>22</sup> The meeting to effect the officers of the club was left unchanged in November. The bylaws of the club were changed to reflect this new organization. The general membership of the club had voted for this change in June of 1910. The auxiliaries, which now numbered six, were still independent of the board of directors and held their meetings at a time which was convenient for them. This change reflected a recognition of the need for a more active central organization that could deal with the daily activities of the educational scene of Chicago. Finally, on 21 October 1910, at the regular meeting of the board of directors, a permanent formal agenda outline was established to conduct all future meetings, A nine item agenda structure was formalized and adapted.<sup>23</sup>

The activities of the club in the past years, had divided themselves into two general areas. The club functioned as a social vehicle for the principals and the members also worked with the various committees of the club which were concerned with the professional responsibilities of the principalship. The club offices, on a daily basis, were available to all members who wished to use them. The offices were used by the members for the purpose of relaxation and social contact. But, more importantly, the offices were used by the many committees of the club which were becoming an important part of its functions. In the month of December 1913 there were forty-eight meetings of committees at the Principals' Club.<sup>24</sup>

The major social event of the year for the club was the annual banquet. This event was usually held in a downtown hotel and featured speakers who were knowledgeable in a specific area of educational thought. The 1916 banquet was held on the nineteenth of January at the Auditorium Hotel and was attended by 515 guests.<sup>25</sup> The committee structure of the Principals' Club indicated a determination of the principals to become involved in the educational and decision making process. In 1911-12 there were twenty-seven standing committees within the club. Every member of the club was assigned to at least one committee.<sup>26</sup> The committees could be grouped into two divisions depending on their function. The first group concerned itself with the improvement of instruction and curriculum which included art, geography, history, mathematics, special education and lagcards. The second group of committees were concerned with the position of the principal and these committees included administration, legislation, the principalship and supplies.<sup>27</sup> Each of the committees made reports which were published in the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter. These reports were usually about the meetings that were held and the decisions and recommendations made by these committees.

On occasion, there were whole issues of the Reporter which were devoted to specific methods to improve instruction. The April 1913 issue gave criteria for textbook selection; the June 1914 issue was dedicated to improving the teaching of grammar and English and the April 1915 issue



was concerned with the teaching of spelling. The Chicago Principals' Club Reporter was changing its character from that of conveying information about daily and weekly events about the schools to a format that also sought to improve the profession by improving instruction.

The members of the Chicago Principals' Club also joined other organizations that were interested in education. Principals joined the National Education Association in 1909. Also in 1909, the Chicago Chapter of the Illinois State Teacher's Association was formed and the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter printed its constitution. Principals from Chicago immediately joined the organization.

On 10 April 1915 the members of the Chicago Principals' Club created the Chicago Principals' Aid Society. The intent of the society was set forth in its constitution which stated that "it is to furnish a fund on the death of a member to the person named by that member."<sup>28</sup> Membership in the society was limited to Chicago school principals or to any person who was ever a Chicago school principal. Each person paid a three dollar initiation fee. Upon the death of a member, the secretary of the society would request one dollar from each of the society members. The amount collected would be turned over to the person designated. The person designated would be determined by a signed document on file with the society.

Fred E. Smith was elected president, Walter J. Harrow was elected treasurer and Esther R. Perry was elected

secretary of the society at the meeting on 10 April 1915.<sup>29</sup> During the existence of the society, until 1933, it paid benefits to fifty-four members. The Chicago principals had for several years been concerned about members of their organization who had died and their families not having enough money to pay for a funeral. The Chicago Principals' Society was in reality a form of burial insurance.

In October 1915, the Course of Study Committee, under the chairmanship of Ambrose B. Wright, completed a two year project which produced a complete course of study for the first nine grades of school. The Principals' Club printed copies of the curriculum and circulated them to all club members, members of the board of education and to all newspapers. There was little interest in the document. Parts of the report were later to be incorporated into the curriculum of the Chicago Public Schools.<sup>30</sup> Also, at that time, the board of education changed its policy and allowed the principal to nominate the assistant principal. This nomination was subject to the approval of the general superintendent. This policy change had long been advocated by the Principals' Club.<sup>31</sup>

The First World War did have an effect on all aspects of the Chicago educational community. War bonds were sold in the schools and all new construction and uncompleted construction of public schools ceased during this period of time. All of the efforts of the people were directed toward this effort. The April 1918 issue of the Chicago

Principals' Club Reporter was devoted to the activities of the principals during the war. The article entitled, "The Schools Part in the War" was written by James Armstrong.<sup>34</sup> A list was printed of the club members and their families who had "responded to the call of patriotism." Also listed was the branch of service and where the person was stationed and how that person was occupied. The members of the club donated money to help with the war effort and furnished an ambulance to the Red Cross with the funds they raised. A plaque was attached to the ambulance proclaiming that the Chicago Principals' Club had purchased the ambulance. The copper plate was removed from the ambulance at the end of the war and hung at the offices of the club. The principals of Chicago and the Chicago Principals' Club became actively involved with Ralph Otis and the legislation that he had drafted that would reorganize the basic structure of the way that the Chicago school system would operate. Events were to happen that would enhance the role and authority of the principal.<sup>33</sup>

#### THE PRINCIPALS' CLUB AND THE OTIS LAW

The Otis Law passed in 1917 and was the result of the efforts of many people. This one law established procedures for the operation of the Chicago Board of Education that are still in effect today. Mr. Hogge, President of the Principals' Club and Mr. C.C. Dodge, Chairman of the

Legislature Committee of the club were asked by Mr. Otis to review the bill and to make suggestions to improve it.<sup>34</sup>

The original draft drawn up by the attorney for the board of education, at the request of Mr. Otis, did not provide for a superintendent of schools. There was a Commissioner of Education who was to make recommendations to the board and if approved, the business manager was to carry them into effect.<sup>35</sup> This bill was introduced into the state legislature by Representative Carl Mueller and was known as the Mueller Bill. Along with the Mueller Bill, there were three other bills introduced to reform the Chicago Board of Education. Mr. Normal Flagg, the chairman of the house committee, instructed all parties to get together and to present one bill that would be acceptable to all parties.<sup>36</sup>

One bill was produced by all of the interested parties and they then returned to Springfield the next week to meet with State Superintendent of Schools Blair to obtain his approval. The Commission of Education was still left in the bill. Mr. Hogge and Mr. Dodge met with Superintendent Blair and voiced their support for a General Superintendent who was responsible for the operation of the school system. Dodge, Hogge, Blair and his attorney worked through the day and reviewed the bill item-by-item. The Teachers Tenure Amendment was added late that evening. The position of General Superintendent was created and given the authority to run the schools of Chicago. The Otis Law also created the Board of Examiners. The creation of the Board of

Examiners changed the way the teachers and principals were selected. Prior to the Otis Law, principals were chosen by the use of a written examination. In addition to the written examination, an oral examination of the successful candidates was included. The successful candidate was placed on an eligibility list and then recommended by the superintendent of schools. Principals were elected to their position each year by a vote of the board of education at their meeting at the end of the school year. The Board of Examiners was charged with the responsibility of holding examinations and preparing all necessary eligibility lists and then to make them open for public inspection. All appointment of teachers and principals were to be made for merit only and after a satisfactory probationary period of three years, their position shall become permanent. Section 161 of the Otis law outlines the procedures to be used to dismiss a teacher or a principal.<sup>37</sup>

As time passed, the requirement to become a principal in Chicago became more demanding and the method selective. The Board of Examiners in 1930 devised a comprehensive rating device for candidates for the position of principal. All candidates were required to present credentials showing that they were graduates of accredited colleges or universities and that they had at least six years of successful experience, two years of which were in actual classroom teaching. A written examination was required, consisting of a major paper which were the professional

studies and three minor papers. The minor papers were English, mathematics, general history and civics. There were also four half-minor papers which included general science, drawing, vocal music and physical education. The major papers counted double the weight of a full minor. A general average of 80, with no grade in any subject below 50, was required. A rating sheet was used to evaluate the oral and experience record of the candidate. The evaluation instrument assigned a maximum of twenty-six points for educational qualifications and thirty-four for experience. The experience of administration and supervision were separate and weighted experience criteria.<sup>38</sup>

The position of principal had become more secure with the passage of the Otis Law. Principals no longer had to continually worry about the security of their jobs if they disagreed with members of the board of education or the general superintendent of schools. Actions could now be considered by the principals that were not even thinkable prior to this law. The passage of the Otis Law was intended to bring rational, expert direction to the Chicago schools and end the political wrangling and corruption that had marked school affairs. However, this was not to be the case. The involvement of politics and graft in the dealings of the board of education increased over the next several years. An article in the Reporter in January 1920 can best summarize the situation at the board of education, as it was entitled, "Chicago's Shame." Turmoil was not to leave the

Chicago Board of Education. Chicago principals and the Chicago Principals' Club were about to be embattled in even greater change and challenge.

The time between 1910 and 1920 saw great changes in the activities of the Chicago Principals' Club. The organization took an active part in the educational community of Chicago. The many committees of the club concerned themselves with attempts to improve the educational programs of the schools. The involvement of the club in the passage of the Otis Law was helpful to its passage. The passage of the Otis Law could only help to make the club a more independent organization that could break from its dependency upon the political structure for their positions. The social activities of the club increased and provided a unity that was missing from the profession. A stronger central governing body developed from need and acted as a spokesmen for the principals on all educational issues and the principals could finally speak to the board of education with one voice that must be heard.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### NEW METHODS AND NEW ORGANIZATION

1920-1927

The turmoil that surrounded the board of education at the end of 1919 continued until William McAndrew was appointed general superintendent in 1924. The changes that occurred during this time were designed to give stability to the schools and to regain the confidence of the public in the schools. Neither of these two goals were achieved. Controversy over the methods employed by McAndrew to achieve his goals destroyed his earnest attempts to provide quality education for the children of Chicago. Changes also took place within the Chicago Principals' Club. It developed a new organizational pattern which made it more democratic and responsive to the needs of all of the principals. During this seven year period, the club changed the bylaws which brought about an organization that is still in use today. Change and confrontation are the two words that describe the Chicago Principals' Club and the educational world it operated within during this time frame.

In January of 1919, the board of education began a

search for a new general superintendent of schools. On 4 January 1919, an emergency meeting of the Board of Directors of the Chicago Principals' Club was called to consider the situation regarding the selection of the new superintendent.<sup>1</sup> The directors authorized a general meeting to take place on 11 January 1919 and recommended that Peter Mortenson be recommended by the club to become the new superintendent. On 11 January 1919 at 10:30 a.m., a general meeting of the Chicago Principals' Club was held at Fullerton Hall with about two hundred principals in attendance.<sup>2</sup>

The general membership voted to forward a letter to the commission choosing a new superintendent. The resolution was to be written by a committee of five principals and was to contain a recommendation that Peter A. Mortenson be appointed general superintendent. The letter, dated 11 January 1919, listed the qualifications needed for a superintendent and stated that "Mr. Mortenson had proven himself to possess these necessary qualifications in an unusual degree." The principals were also strongly against the selection of a superintendent from outside of the system. The resolution stated that a new superintendent "must have a through working knowledge of the Chicago schools and of Chicago conditions. His (Mortenson) election to the superintendency will be no experiment." The letter was approved and forwarded to the commission selecting a new superintendent.<sup>3</sup>

## MORTENSON ELECTED SUPERINTENDENT

In March of 1919, the board of education elected Peter Mortenson superintendent of schools. The former superintendent, Charles E. Chadsey, whom the board had locked out of his office, took the board to court contending that under the provisions of the Otis Law, he had a four year term and could not be dismissed. Chadsey won the case and was ordered reinstated as superintendent. The board members and Chadsey began a life of constant antagonism and on 26 November 1919, Chadsey submitted a letter of resignation. Peter Mortenson was reappointed superintendent of the schools. Mortenson entered the superintendency under a cloud as many people accused him of cooperating with the board in its treatment of Chadsey.

The Chicago Principals' Club did support Mortenson and was not of the opinion that Chadsay has been badly treated by the board of education. The Chicago Principals' Club expressed its opinion of the circumstances surrounding this controversy in an editorial in the Principals' Club Reporter in January 1920. The editorial noted that the only effective line of resistance had been the moral and professional integrity of the teaching force in the schools.<sup>4</sup> The blame for the turmoil in the schools and the picking of a new superintendent was the responsibility of one man. This man is the current president of the board of

education."<sup>5</sup> In its appraisal of Mortensen, the editorial stated that in Mortensen, the teachers had found a man who would speak the truth and do justice instead of selfish politics. The teachers were united as never before behind this man. This editorial certainly was a bold action by the Chicago Principals' Club and one that was not in character with other actions.<sup>6</sup>

Peter Mortenson was general superintendent of the Chicago schools from November 1919 until he submitted his resignation on 13 January 1923. It was during the Mortenson superintendency that some of the most flagrant and wild looting of the school finances took place by members of the board of education. Board members attempted to obtain legislation to sell remaining Loop and other school lands. Friends of board members were told about new school sites so they could buy that land cheap and sell it to the board at a high price. Some nonexistent companies got large contracts. In 1921, the board charged \$8,714,065 to "incidentals."<sup>8</sup> Superintendent Mortenson was not a part of these actions and was never accused of any wrong doings.

In May 1922, a grand jury requested by the Municipal League and the Women's City Club investigated the finances of the board of education. The grand jury indicted a former board president, a former vice-president, the board attorney and forty other persons involved in illegal deals. Two school engineers were sent to jail for refusing to testify. These two engineers were later returned to service in

September 1922, with full back pay. This action was protested by the teachers federation but to no avail. Reform of the Chicago Board of Education was an issue of the 1923 mayoral race. Reform was needed and reform is what happened. With the reform, a new superintendent and a new era of educational philosophy came to the Chicago education scene.

William E. Dever, a judge, replaced William Thompson as mayor of Chicago in 1923 and he immediately replaced the members of the board of education. The new board set out to find a new general superintendent. They wanted a superintendent who would stop the waste of funds and improve the educational standards of the city schools. They hired William McAndrew as superintendent and he did accomplish exactly what the board hired him to do and also did strengthen the educational authority of his office. McAndrew's career with the Chicago Board of Education was long and would end in a manner that can only be described as one of the most unusual in Chicago education.

#### McANDREW BECOMES SUPERINTENDENT

William McAndrew became superintendent on 1 February 1924. He established his goals and made known to everyone exactly what these goals were. McAndrew wanted greater efficiency in school administration and set high standards of achievement in all academic areas for the students. To

accomplish this goal, he established a "line and staff" system of supervision to insure that teachers met a fixed criteria of performance. He wanted a junior high school system, to get teachers to school on time, build more schools, use all schools twelve months a year and tell the public what it needed for a good school system. He also strongly supported the platoon system of education. The platoon system is comparable to the departmental system, currently used in schools. Teachers with subject specialities taught only that speciality to children each day. McAndrew was to accomplish all of these objectives but the manner he used would bring him in conflict with the teachers while gaining the support of the business community and some liberals in Chicago.<sup>7</sup>

William McAndrew came to Chicago with a view that his efficiency as superintendent could be measured through appropriate tests. He said that the aim of a school system was "to produce a human social unit, trained in accordance with his capabilities to the nearest approach to complete social efficiency possible in the time allotment."<sup>10</sup> The reference to a child as a unit as if that child were a product being produced on an assembly line or in a factory tells us about the scientific method and the philosophy of McAndrew. The industrialists of the time must have relished this type of statement and certainly gave the teachers a great deal of concern.

When McAndrew arrived in Chicago, he was welcomed by



the teachers and other groups who hoped that he would end the graft and restore the schools to their proper position. It took only a few months for this attitude of support to change. The attitude of support quickly changed to hostility which was caused by McAndrew's rapid moves to concentrate power in his office and to reorganize the school system based on his efficiency notion, as well as his frequent and loud remarks and tirades about the incompetence and laziness of the Chicago teaching force.

The superintendent was determined to open junior high schools in Chicago. Prior to the arrival of McAndrew, the board had established a committee to determine the validity of using the junior high school plan. The committee had recommended its adoption. The controversy that surrounded its adoption on 14 May 1924 was not concerning the educational plan itself but rather the controversial methods of the superintendent in obtaining action about this plan.

There were thirty-nine teacher councils that met with the general superintendent as outlined by the rules of the board of education. These councils were designed to provide the general superintendent with advice and information from the various teacher groups to help him make more informed decisions about the educational system. These councils were also designed to make the teachers feel that they were involved in the decision making process and stemmed directly from the philosophy of Ella Flagg Young. These councils were not very active during the superintendency of either

Mortenson or Chadsey. However, the teacher did regard the councils as a symbol of their importance to the educational system. These councils asked McAndrew to give them more information about the goals and objectives of the junior high plan and certainly they wanted more information about what this implied for the teachers. McAndrew refused to meet with the councils but later reversed this decision upon advice from the attorney for the board of education.

On 14 May 1924, the board of education voted to install, throughout the system, the concept of the junior high school.<sup>9</sup> The actions and attitude of McAndrew to bring about his change, without consulting the teacher council or responding to their questions and concerns provoked the teachers. Rumors that McAndrew had been brought to Chicago to subdue the teachers and to support the dominations of the schools by business interest spread rapidly.<sup>10</sup>

#### THE JUNIOR HIGH SYSTEM

The committee of the board of education that approved the junior high school plan emphasized the programs flexibility. A major consideration of the plan was that junior high school students would have a curriculum that would be differentiated, and this could not be accomplished if they attended regular elementary schools. The committee concluded that "the grouping of pupils according to their abilities to progress, which is possible in junior high

schools is an important consideration."<sup>11</sup>

The Chicago principals held a special meeting on 24 March 1924 to determine a club policy in reference to the junior high school system. A committee which was formed on 15 March 1924 presented the position the twenty members had agreed upon for the general membership to review. The policy adapted at the 29 March meeting stated that "The Chicago Principals' Club approves, on educational grounds, the grouping together of grades 7, 8, and 9 as a district educational unit with the same course of study for these grades, wherever housed." The policy did suggest that Chicago should develop its own program for the junior high rather than pattern it on existing programs.<sup>13</sup>

The Chicago teachers were greatly concerned by the methods used to install the junior high school and the platoon system. Many of the individual teacher councils made statements which showed that they distrusted the advocates of the plan. Some of these advocates had supported the Cooley plan which the teachers councils opposed and worked hard to defeat it. The Chicago Teachers Federation strongly opposed the junior high plan. Margaret Haley voiced complete opposition to the plan and to Superintendent McAndrew. This attitude of condemnation and opposition to McAndrew's plans, by Haley, can be seen throughout his superintendency.

The Chicago Teachers Federation had many reasons for its opposition to the junior high plan. The federation

objected to the lack of response of McAndrew to answer their questions about the plan. They objected to a teacher examination for junior high teachers without the authorization of the board of education. This particular action by McAndrew certainly illustrates his dominance of the board and reflects his authoritarian philosophy of the position of the superintendent. The federation argued, and correctly, that the Chicago teachers already had certificates to teach all grades in the elementary school. They were qualified to teach in the junior high schools. It was reasoned that if their present certificates could be partially invalidated by an act of the general superintendent, then why not the rest of the certificate by another act of the superintendent. The teachers could also point to the principals who were appointed to the five junior high schools as they were not required to take a new examination for that appointment. The examination for junior high school teachers was given without any challenge from the members of the board of education. It can only be assumed that the wishes and domination of McAndrew suppressed any opposition from the board.

The labor movement viewed the junior high and platoon system as a move to make the school system over into a replica of the Ford automobile plant, pouring little children into a hopper at one end and grinding them out at the other end as perfect parts in an industrial machine. To summarize labors' feelings about the philosophy of

efficiency these words are representative, "could anything more dramatically illustrate how this mechanized platoon system, with its precision, standardization, efficiency as its gods, had its birthplace in the inhuman, undemocratic industrial machine." Labor felt that businessmen were only too ready to cry economy with the public schools because their children attended the private schools.<sup>13</sup>

#### MCANDREW AND THE TEACHER'S COUNCILS

The relationship between the teachers and Superintendent McAndrew became completely adversarial with the abolishment of the teacher council and the casual and demeaning manner used by McAndrew to accomplish this act. The teacher councils were symbols to the teachers of their importance in the system and to the teaching profession. The teachers were violently upset when they were told by McAndrew that the councils were not recognized as necessary. The councils were an activity the teachers had been granted decades before this action. The teachers who were already upset with their treatment during the junior high actions were now completely galvanized in their opposition to the general superintendent.

McAndrew was critical of the choice that teachers had in the policy making of the educational system of Chicago. It was his conviction that he had been brought to Chicago to put an end to that policy. In a speech to the University of

Michigan Club he said that he had been brought to Chicago to weaken the Chicago Teachers Federation. He said that he was "loosening the hold of the invisible empire within the schools, a weird system, a selfish system, doing everything to indicate a selfish purpose and demanding the right to govern the schools."<sup>14</sup>

A new organization to replace the teachers councils was approved by the board of education. This plan, devised by McAndrew, abolished all the old teacher councils. The new organization was composed of a representative from each of the twelve voluntary teacher organizations, one assistant superintendent, one district superintendent, and one principal from a high school and elementary school. The council was doomed to failure from its inception because of the philosophy and attitude toward it by its author and founder. The committees' usefulness and function as viewed by the general superintendent is apparent in McAndrew's philosophy when he said, "A return to the generally approved system is desirable. The superintendent must organize, deputize and supervise. The schools need close supervision."<sup>15</sup>

McAndrew was not impressed by objections to any of his policies. He was quoted as telling a group of new principals that "you have the hand of iron, use it. If teachers or a wild bunch of citizens try to run your schools, put a stop to it with the power that you have."<sup>16</sup> The walls of isolation were going up around the schools and

the chasm between the superintendent and the teachers was widening day by day. The teachers were unified in their dislike for the general superintendent and his policies. McAndrew seemed to follow a philosophy that stressed that teachers should speak when spoke to and that they were there to take orders from people who were better than them.

The conflict between the superintendent and teachers made news and the daily Chicago papers reported it with great detail. In his annual report of 1924-25, the superintendent reprinted headlines of his conflicts. The superintendent's report cites sixteen editorials which were defenses of the superintendents actions by the newspaper. One newspaper praised McAndrew as being "refreshingly hard boiled and thick skinned."<sup>17</sup>

None of the warnings apparent in newspaper editorials were taken seriously by McAndrew. It seems that he made no attempt to answer his critics or change his style of management. The political forces must have been aware that labor's voting power was far greater than that of the businessmen who supported McAndrew. They must have watched this conflict with growing concern. The school conflict was rapidly becoming a political issue.

#### MCANDREW AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The relationship between the board of education and Superintendent McAndrew took yet another turn for the worse

in April of 1925. McAndrew had a bill drafted to retire all members of the teaching force over seventy years of age. The bill was presented to the state legislature by a teacher legislature named Walter Miller and it passed the House. The Senate amended it, but the conference committee approved the original House form. The Senate passed it on the last day of the session. The bill was not sent to the governor because it had not been passed by the House. It was not signed by the governor so it could not be put into effect. The proposed law allowed for the termination from service at age seventy-five in 1926, and age seventy-four in 1927, and, by 1930, of all teachers who had reached the age of seventy. On 9 December 1925 the board passed a rule which stated that no teacher over the age of seventy, except the superintendent, shall be employed in the schools. A new category of teacher called the "emeritus service" was created.

On 1 February 1926, seventy teachers and principals were assigned to the emeritus service. The Otis Law was specific in reasons for service termination and age was not one of the reasons. A law suit was prepared and filed against the board of education. The attorney general ruled that the Miller Law has been passed and it was signed by the governor on 19 May 1926. The Illinois State Supreme Court declared that the board had no right to fire the employees and was directed to pay all teachers' salary from 1 February 1926 until the end of the school year and to restore all of



them to the service. The board paid almost a quarter of a million dollars in salary to all those individuals who were forced to retire and for performing no services for the school board. McAndrew certainly lost face with the board and as a result of this action and his recommendations to remove the employees.

#### PRINCIPALS AND THE MILLER RULE

The Principals' Club apparently supported McAndrew in his efforts to create the emeritus status for teachers and principals. No direct evidence can be found to support his conclusion; however, three separate actions of the club indicate support for the action. On 17 April 1926, the club gave a luncheon for the twenty-seven principals who were retired under the emeritus act. The club also voted to make all of these principals with a record of ten years of past service in the club honorary members of the club. The lack of any aggressive action to fight the Miller Rule by the club, the third act, can only be viewed as acceptance of the rule.<sup>18</sup>

#### CLERKS AND THE CLUB

The status employment of the school clerks was the next conflict between McAndrew and the board. Since 1909, the school clerks had been certified teachers. In 1927 a

court case held that janitors and firemen must be chosen by the City Civil Service Commission and provided civil service status and seniority rights. Employees of the board of education were under the jurisdiction of the City Civil Service Commission except those exempted by the Civil Service Act. Only those engaged in actual teaching were exempt. On 3 August 1927 the board adopted a resolution dismissing all three hundred fifty school clerks and filling their places from the civil service lists. The general superintendent was outraged. McAndrew helped the school clerks draw up a law suit and asked for an immediate injunction to stop the action of the board. This law suit failed and the City of Chicago had taken over the non-teaching employees of the Chicago Board of Education.

A special meeting of the Chicago Principals' Club was held on 15 May 1926 with Superintendent McAndrew at 10:00 A.M. at the City Club. McAndrew raised the question of the Civil Service Commission trying to take over the employment of the clerks in the schools and asked the club to support his position of rejecting the attempted take over. The club took no action on this request.<sup>19</sup>

The last and final confrontation in the McAndrew superintendency came from outside of the board of education and would cost McAndrew his job in one of the most bizarre incidents in the history of the board of education. William Dever was running against William Hale Thompson for mayor of Chicago. Thompson seized on the issue of the schools and

particularly on McAndrew. The general superintendent took an active role in the mayoral campaign and endorsed Dever. The endorsement made Thompson an immediate enemy and provided an issue for Thompson. Thompson attacked the English in the personage of King George. The English were the scapegoat as there were so few of them in Chicago. Thompson adopted the attitude of an ultra patriotic American. Thompson wanted the Volstead Act repealed, no metered water, no World Court, the University of Chicago kept out of the the schools and the superintendent of schools and his unpatriotic textbooks kicked out.<sup>20</sup>

The mayor charged McAndrew with seeking to destroy American patriotism and to downgrade the contributions of non-British ethnic groups through biased presentations of American history. McAndrew probably became the mayor's special target because he had already antagonized a large part of the population and this would benefit Thompson at the polls. The entire platform makes little sense but it inflamed enough people to make a difference in the mayoral race. William Thompson was elected mayor and immediately began attacking McAndrews.

On 29 August 1926, the board of education voted six to five to suspend William McAndrew pending trial.<sup>21</sup> The charge against him was insubordination. The charges against him were based on his support for the school clerks. The trial began in September. In November, McAndrew walked out of the proceedings and refused to return. To dispose of

McAndrew was not an easy task. He had a valid contract and therefore could only be fired for cause. The board of education seized upon the dispute over the civil service status of the teacher clerks and accused McAndrew of failing to follow board directives. An article in the New York Times described the trial as a "mixture of vaudeville, burlesque and the broadcast farce."<sup>22</sup>

In March of 1928, the board voted to dismiss McAndrew, two months after his four year term was over. The era of William McAndrew as Superintendent of Chicago Public Schools had come to an end. When McAndrew was suspended by the board in August of 1927, his assistant superintendent, William J. Bogan, was made acting superintendent and in June 1928 was elected to the post. Bogan immediately come into conflict with Mayor Thompson. As Thompson attempted to use the schools for his political advantage, he met resistance from Bogan. Bogan took on the posture of defending the educational departments against the onslaught of the board which was dominated by Thompson appointments.

It is clear that William McAndrew was brought to Chicago to bring order and to restore confidence in the school system after it has been pillaged by the Thompson regime. It is, however, unclear whether his attitude and philosophy about the role of the superintendent and his attacks on teachers was designed to eliminate the Chicago Teachers Federation. McAndrew was determined to restore to the superintendency the power to make decisions without

consultation or consideration from either the teachers or any political group. This attitude doomed McAndrew from the first day of his administration and eventually led to his removal. McAndrew lacked the political skills necessary for a superintendent to survive in the Chicago school system.

#### THE PRINCIPALS' CLUB CHANGES

During this seven year period there were many changes that occurred within the structure of the Chicago Principals' Club. There was a major shift in the way the club operated and how it made decisions. The emphasis shifted from the auxiliaries having all of the power to a strong central authority. To accomplish all of its objectives, the club hired a full-time special secretary. Many changes were to occur during this time period.

The leadership of the Chicago Principals' Club changed four times between 1920 and 1927. Fred E. Smith was elected president in 1920 and 1921. Rose A. Pesta took over the office in 1922 and 1923. George A. Beers was elected in 1924 and 1925. Daniel J. Beeby assumed the office in 1926 and 1927. All four of these president were principals of elementary schools. Pesta and Beeby had held an office in the club before their election while Smith and Beers had been members of committees but had not been officers of the club.

It will be recalled that Rose A. Pesta was the first

women elected as president of the Principals' Club. A women had been on the executive board in 1909 and on every board of directors since that time. Pesta was eventually to become an assistant superintendent in the Chicago Schools.

It was during the time that Pesta was president that several major changes occurred in the club. Membership in the organization had increased to 287. Dues were raised to thirty dollars per year and a special secretary was employed by the club. Pesta spearheaded a general reorganization of the club and changed the bylaws. She led an unsuccessful attempt to increase the salary of principals, but helped win an increase in the school building fund.

The Principals' Club Reporter, in December of 1922, published a copy of the new bylaws that were approved by the general membership. As in most organizations, not all of the members were in favor of the changes. The relationship between the auxiliaries and the board of directors was changed. Under the new bylaws, the auxiliaries would have no power within the club or appointed members on the board of directors. The auxiliaries would have no dues to collect and receive no financial support. With this change in organization, the Principals' Club had developed into a central body controlled by the board of directors and its elected officers. Some members felt that this centralized body would increase the power and influence of the club.<sup>23</sup> Others looked at the reorganization as a means of streamlining the organization. As one of the principals

stated "I am in favor of a powerful, efficient, enthusiast and aggressive Principals' Club. Such an organization means professional leadership for Chicago schools."<sup>24</sup> In the preceding year, there had been thirty-nine standing committees. These were to be reduced to eighteen within the reorganization. The general membership meetings which were held once a year were now made a monthly event. All members in good standing were invited to attend each month. These general meetings were established to get "more democratic expression of opinion on the part of the entire membership."<sup>25</sup> After the bylaws were passed, within the first nine months of 1922-23 there were six general meetings of the club, eleven meetings of the board of directors, five social affairs and an evening with a guest poet that was sponsored by the club.<sup>26</sup> The new bylaws were adopted on 18 November 1922 at a general membership meeting and became effective immediately.

In May of 1923 additional changes in the bylaws were passed. Two of the most significant were that "officers and members of the board of directors must be members of the club for two years prior to their election and that only members in good standing could vote for the candidates for office."<sup>27</sup> "In good standing" meant that the member had paid annual dues. By these two actions, the members of the club had finally asserted that there were qualifications to run for office and to vote for the candidates. This can be viewed as an exclusion policy of those principals who did

not wish to follow all of the club's membership rules. With the new organization and a switch of authority from the local auxiliaries to a centralized decision making body, changes in the process to determine club actions and activities took place. Each of the auxiliaries passed resolutions pertaining to what each auxiliary determined as important and necessary actions for the club to take on their behalf. These resolutions were then sent to the board of directors for review. If the board of directors felt that the suggestions were in the interest of the club or a great many of the principals, they voted upon an action which became the club policy. This change in the decision making procedure is a dramatic switch from the independent authority given to the auxiliaries in the clubs early days. A strong centralized organization that was representative of all of the principals was now being established.

#### THE CLUB HIRES A SECRETARY

In May of 1923, the Principals' Club voted to hire a full-time person to act as a special secretary. Donald C. Rogers was hired by a vote of all of the members, at the annual salary of three thousand dollars. Rose Pesta, the club president, supported this action by stating that

"We need someone who can devote his full time to conserving our interests; whose business it is to carry forward our measures whether administrative or



education. In no other way can our interests be properly safeguarded."<sup>28</sup>

Prior to the hiring of Rogers, all of the club's activities were handled by principals after they had concluded their work in the schools. With the increase in membership and dues, the club was in a position to hire a full-time employee to carry out the club directives. The special secretary was responsible to the board of directors and took assignments from the club president.

Donald C. Rogers held qualifications that were impressive. He was awarded a Ph.D. from the University of Iowa in August of 1923 where he majored in education.<sup>29</sup> He served as superintendent of schools in Iowa and Missouri and for two years was an instructor of education at the University of Iowa in the education department. Rogers was to remain as special secretary until 1926.

The impact of the role of the special secretary is immediately apparent with his first report in the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter of November, 1923. Rogers' activities included reports to the club president on three issues. The first dealt with statistics on school board expenditures; the second with the amount of tax assessment and amount collected and the third, with a comparison of principal's salaries in other cities. Rogers also attended two board of education meetings, seven board of education committee meetings, one general membership meeting of the club, two club officers meetings and four club committee

meetings, as well as maintaining the routine of the club offices.<sup>30</sup> The activities of the special secretary were reported each month in the club's journal. The presence of the Chicago Principals' Club had taken a dramatic step forward with the hiring of the special secretary.

Donald C. Rogers resigned in October of 1926 to become the principal of the Smyth Elementary School. He was replaced by Enos L. Keezel. Keezel was a member of the education department at Whitman College in Walla Walla Washington and had earned a doctorate in education at Whitman in 1924.

During 1926 and 1927, the Principals' Club went about its business with little change in its organization or structure. The Chicago Principals' Club Reporter took on the look of a publication that occupied itself with the dissemination of information about local self-serving interests. This information pertained to the publishing of the minutes of the board of directors, the publishing of the reports of the various committees, actions of the board of education, hints on how to improve instruction and reports of the deaths of club members. A letter from the general superintendent to the principals appeared in just about every issue. None of these letters dealt with a substantial issue and were more along the lines of support for the principals' position.

One important organizational change did occur between 1926 and 1927. The high school principals' auxiliary was

formed. Before this time, high school principals though there was little opportunity for them to have a voice or influence the policies of the club. The majority of the high school principals had managed their own affairs for so many years that they probably saw no need to unite with the elementary principals. There was no doubt that a feeling of inferiority was the rule for elementary principals until several of the high school principals had retired and their places were filled by younger men who had been principals of elementary schools. About half of the senior high school principals were members of the club, but there was no auxiliary of high school principals until 1926. Albert V. Evans, principal of Tilden High School, seems to be responsible for the formation of Auxiliary Eight, which was composed entirely of high school principals.

The Chicago Principals' Club was characteristically quiet during the trial of Superintendent McAndrew. No mention is made in the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter or any of the other written material associated with the club. It was not until he was found guilty and dismissed that a mention was made in the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter. In a ten line statement the club said

Superintendent William McAndrew, on March 21, 1928, at the twenty-eighth session of his hearing, was officially dismissed after having been voted guilty of charges of insubordination and of conduct inconsistent of the duties of his office.<sup>31</sup>

It would seem that once again the club had taken a position not to become involved in issues that dealt directly with their immediate line officer, the general superintendent. Perhaps the good relationship that existed between this superintendent and the principals was the reason for this quietness. Perhaps it was fear of the power of the personality of McAndrew that caused this obvious silence of the club. Each of these is a valid assumption and reasonably based on the past actions of the club. These are both general and specific conclusions that we can draw about the Chicago Principals' Club and the educational events that occurred during the time from 1920 until 1927.

The labor movement in general and the teachers were on the defensive during the decade of the 1920. Labor viewed McAndrew's educational plans as a class struggle. The measurement or scientific movement in education did not represent progress to the Chicago Federation of Labor. The strict supervision method placed unrealistic demands on teachers and students were not afforded a full democratic education. McAndrew had produced a form of educational organization in which students would be sorted and tracked at an early age. This could be characterized as identification and unequal educational opportunity. The strict supervision method did not take into account the ability of the teacher to evaluate and to be a part of the educational process and to participate in the decision making process. The use of standardized tests and

unrealistic achievement standards only fostered false claims of goals being achieved. The process marked children for specific programs at an early age. The children developed and changed: the determination of their membership in the program did not.

The removal of McAndrew as superintendent brought about a strange configuration of parties. The Chicago Federation of Labor and Margaret Haley's alliance with William Thompson was perhaps the most shocking. This political alliance influenced the 1920s in dramatic fashion. The labor movement in Chicago was in a state of change and losing its impact and influence.

The Chicago Principals' Club moved to a centralized form of organization and became representative of the views of the entire membership. All of the principals of the Chicago schools were united into one organization. The club became involved in many of the confrontations within the schools with an active interest and with a united effort to achieve most of their objectives. The club was financially solvent and could afford to hire staff to help them meet their objectives.

## CHAPTER FIVE NOTES

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4. Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, 1 January 1920, 32.
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6. Mary Herrick, The Chicago Schools: A Social and Political History (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1971), 142.
7. Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, (1926), 15-16.
8. William McAndrew, "The Principal," The Chicago Schools Journal, 9 (November 1924): 81.
9. Proceedings of the Board of Education of the City of Chicago, 14 May 1924, 89.
10. George S. Counts, School and Society in Chicago (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1928), 105.
11. Chicago Board of Education, "Proposal to Establish Junior High Schools in the City of Chicago", 12 December 1923, 8.
12. Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, April 1924, 3. See also Joan K. Smith, "Educational Policy and Conflict in Chicago Schools: The McAndrew Years, 1924-27," Journal of the Midwest History of Education Society 15 (1981): 44-50.
13. New Majority, 29 December 1923, 4.
14. Margaret Haley's Bulletin, "Superintendent Lets the Cat Out of the Bag," 15 May 1927, 246.

15. Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, (1925), 10.
16. Chicago Tribune, 5 March 1927, 17.
17. Chicago Tribune, 31 December 1925, 13.
18. Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, April 1926, 2.
19. Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, June 1926, 1-2.
20. Mary Herrick, The Chicago Schools: A Social and Political History, 167.
21. Chicago Board of Education, Proceedings of the Board of Education of the City of Chicago, (Chicago: City of Chicago, 1925-26), 214.
22. New York Times, 27 October 1927, 28.
23. Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, September 1926, 2.
24. Ibid., 3.
25. Rose Pesta to the Chicago Principals' Club. 1922-1924. Chicago Principals' Association, Chicago.
26. Ibid.
27. Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, May 1923, 2.
28. Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, September 1923, 1.
29. Ibid., 4.
30. Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, November 1925, 2.
31. Chicago Principals' Club Reporter, March-April, 1928, 35.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE SCHOOLS IN CRISIS, 1928-1936

The fiscal policies practiced by the Chicago Board of Education, in conjunction with the general economic conditions of the nation, would drastically alter the Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Principals' Club. A series of events, between the dismissal of William McAndrew as general superintendent and that historic meeting of the Chicago Board of Education on 12 July 1933 would culminate in the dismantling of the Chicago schools. These events that led to the fiscal crisis began long before William Bogan became superintendent of schools but certainly the situation became fatal during his administration. These same financial events were almost fatal to the Chicago Principals' Club but it did survive and at times challenged the actions of the Chicago Board of Education during this crisis. Although the club did not win any of the battles with the board, the seeds were planted for the club to become a union and to divest itself of the subservient mentality it had developed over the years.



## BOGAN AND THE SCHOOLS

A very positive and supportive relationship developed almost immediately between Superintendent of Schools, William Bogan and the Chicago Principals' Club. Bogan recognized the power and the authority of the Chicago principals and asked the "hearty cooperation of the Principals' Club."<sup>1</sup> The club responded by welcoming Bogan to the position of superintendent and pledged to "cooperate with the new administration to the fullest extent."<sup>2</sup> The club then expressed its support of Bogan and his actions to reorganize the administration of the schools, by stating that "Chicago has a superintendent of schools." This editorial supported the policies of Bogan by stating that "the Chicago Principals' Club expressed to the general superintendent the wish to assist him in every way possible."<sup>3</sup> On 29 September 1928, the club gave a dinner and a reception to honor Bogan and requested that he address the group. The principals' club once again gave its unconditional support to the superintendent and his policies as it had done with all other superintendents. It would seem that the principals embraced Bogan more quickly and ardently in an effort to bring stability and confidence back to the schools after the trial of McAndrew and the political turmoil that surrounded that event.

## THE CLUB AND FINANCES

The Chicago Principals' Club first expressed concern about the finances of the schools in 1928 when it said that "the simple fact is the revenues of the schools are not adequate to meet the expenditures." The club recommended that "a public airing of the question, fairly and squarely done, would at least acquaint the public with the financial needs of the schools."<sup>4</sup> On a second occasion, the club reviewed the finances of the schools in its journal. In a summary statement of the situation it was stated that,

The Chicago Principals' Club has for years, warned the board of education of the approach of this condition, the exhaustion of the educational fund, but up to this time, the board has taken no effective action to make income match expenses.<sup>5</sup>

Financial disaster was the result of this policy.

The Principals' Club published a platform for reform to address the financial needs of the Chicago schools. The club asserted that "the methods of taxation and of financing the schools were in need of revision." The club then recommended that the Illinois General Assembly provide additional revenues by "a distribution of state school funds comparable to the state of New York and increases in the territorial tax."<sup>6</sup> The territorial tax was a tax that was to be assessed within a certain region of the state for use

by the governmental agencies within that region. The club also had ideas about how to use this proposed increase in school funding. The club also wanted to make as a part of this revenue increase the stipulation that the "money may only be used for the following enumerated purposes only: salaries of those engaged in instruction and supervisors of instructors and the teachers' retirement pensions."<sup>7</sup> The platform also advocated that the Chicago Board of Education provide a adequate salary increase and reduce the teachers and administrative work load. The Principals' Club certainly had their welfare in mind when they drafted and approved this platform.

#### ECONOMIES AND THE SCHOOL BOARD

A fundamental shift in the development of Chicago and the Chicago schools occurred during the nineteen thirties. The Great Depression left an estimated one-half of the city's work force unemployed and caused a financial collapse of municipal governments including the board of education, and produced the emergence of the Democratic political machine which would dominate Chicago for decades to come.<sup>8</sup> The Democrats swept the 1932 elections as they were supported by both business and labor. In the partnership, the schools in Chicago became the target of business sponsored cost-cutting actions that were approved by labor but with both groups supporting the Democratic mayor, the

conflicts were silent.

The finances of the Chicago schools had for several years been sliding into an untenable position. This situation came even before the Thompson control of the civil service and before the Depression. There had been an attempt to straighten out the tax issue but this attempt collapsed and all tax collections were held up for three years which put the school system in dire distress. The board of education did not see fit to ask for more funds as they did not want to offend a mayor who would appoint them.<sup>9</sup>

There were many reasons that the schools cost more to operate. Enrollment increased as the population of Chicago increased by twenty-one percent between 1915 and 1925. More children were in school and demanded more technical and domestic courses. Physical education, kindergarten and education for the handicapped were included as necessary educational programs. Textbooks were now to be furnished free but not before a fight between the business interests and the people. The issue was resolved by a referendum that passed by a mere seven thousand votes. It should be noted that the Chicago Board of Education and Mayor William Thompson were against the free textbooks.<sup>10</sup>

There were other services the board of education provided which were costly that were added to their budget. The Chicago school board took on the responsibility of a junior college and a three year normal college. Playgrounds, bus transportation for the handicapped, the "penny lunch,"

community centers, the teacher pension laws and an army of civil service employees brought the city schools from a cash to a credit operation. The employees who were hired under civil service provided a patronage army for the mayor and added hundred of jobs to the school payrolls. The school budget had grown from \$16,846,801 in 1915 to \$83,000,000 in 1929.<sup>11</sup>

A special factor contributed to the financial crisis in the Chicago schools. For many years the board of education had been spending more money than it had taken in for that year in taxes. This financial miracle was possible because prior to 1915, the board of education had not spent tax money until after it was collected. The tax money levied for 1913 was collected by the end of 1913 and was spent in 1914 as cash in hand. Money was not borrowed for current expenses. But, by a change in state law, a municipality might spend the 1913 tax money in 1913 by selling tax warrants for up to 75 percent of the year's taxes before the taxes were collected. Between 1915 and 1926 the board of education shifted from a cash basis to one of credit by using the tax warrant system. By doing so, the board of education had used up almost eleven years of tax incomes in ten years. By 1927, this procedure had used up all of the available surplus. There was an obvious need to increase the school revenue and the logical place to do this was to increase the taxes. Several attempts were made to increase taxes by increasing assessment but these failed as

the assessments were under evaluated or the people just did not pay them. Aid from the city and state was not provided as they had no money to help. There was not a pot of gold to be found to help the schools.

The board of education had for many years increased its revenues by using a fiscal trick of mirrors involving tax anticipation warrants. Rather than basing each year's budget on the amount collected, the budget was based on the taxes that were anticipated for the following year.<sup>12</sup> This assumption always was that the taxes for the following year could be greater than the current year and thus a larger budget was always possible. This assumption was in error and would eventually have a disastrous effect on the finances of the school system.

The onset of a depression became the dominate force in the Chicago. Unemployment, the closing of the banks, as unemployed workers could no longer make payments on loans and mortgages, and the refusal of banks, in fear of closing, to commit their remaining cash or assets in tax warrants. These factors all pressed hard on the schools in Chicago and across the state. Tax warrants for 1928 and 1929 were clearly not going to be paid by the unemployed. Families had to survive and the taxes could wait to be paid.

The teacher's paychecks for November and December of 1929 were late. The paychecks for January 1930 were delivered to the teachers in March. This situation was a financial nightmare that was destined to last for many

years. An auditor made this statement "there are insufficient revenues in sight to meet teachers payrolls after October 1930."<sup>13</sup>

There was no money to pay the teachers and there was no money to pay the banks interest on outstanding tax warrants, or to pay for maturing bonds. Tax payers were encouraged not to pay taxes even if they were able. There developed a realization among the people that the depression was not a temporary matter and this feeling deepened in the minds of the people. The state legislature stopped the tax bills of 1930 from being issued. The money machine for government had come to an abrupt and dead stop.

The teachers of Chicago were not idle during this crisis. They collected almost one million signatures on a petition directed to the Illinois General Assembly and asked it for immediate action to keep the schools open. The teachers also rented the Chicago Stadium and had a mass rally on 4 January 1932. Six days later, the teachers presented the petitions to the state legislature. They were ignored by the state legislature.

#### DEMOCRATS AND THE SCHOOLS

The 1931 mayoral election was won by the Democratic ticket which was headed by Anton Cermak. Cermak defeated the second time mayor William Thompson. Nearly all of the Democrats for local and county offices won by a large margin

and the Democratic party gained complete control of the county machinery.<sup>14</sup>

Immediately after becoming Mayor, Cermak was forced to deal with the city's economic crisis. Cermak requested that the board of education make budget cuts that would balance their budget and bring some sort of stability to the system and renew faith in the tax warrant system by the financial community. This request was accomplished by the board but only after great pressure was brought upon them by a citizens group which was dominated by the business and banking interests.

In January of 1932, the Chicago Board of Education was considering the 1932 school budget. The budget, first presented on 18 December 1931, cut expenditures by 14 percent below the 1931 budget base. Teacher salaries were cut 11.34 percent, class size was increased, sick leave pay was stopped and there were reductions in the budget at the Crane and Normal College.<sup>15</sup> On 3 March 1932, the board of education adopted this budget with these reductions.

Prior to the budget reductions, Cermak made this statement about the board "the majority of the board, a holdover from the Thompson regime, is chiefly concerned with saving itself and its friends. Chicago is concerned with saving its schools."<sup>16</sup>

On 11 March 1932, Mayor Anton Cermak announced that no more school tax warrants could be sold until the members of the board of education, who were appointed by Mayor



Thompson, were changed. The state legislature on 15 March 1932 enacted a law which authorized the board to issue "Not Sufficient Funds" checks or scrip for payment of debts for the Chicago schools. The business community refused to buy any tax warrants as they saw the scrip as lessening the warrant value.

The political situation changed dramatically on 6 March 1933 when Mayor Anton Cermak was killed from an assassin's bullet. The successor to Cermak was Edward Kelly.

While Cermak had been handicapped with the board of education because of the six Thompson hold over members, Kelly had the opportunity to appoint seven new members within a few months after he took office. Kelly named five members to the board in May of 1933. None of the members appointed by Kelly had been to college and none of them had demonstrated any previous interest in education.<sup>17</sup>

#### DRASTIC BUDGET CUTS

Kelly was clear about the reason that he appointed these board member. He expected them to follow a program of economy and Kelly admitted that his board members did not have any educational background but rather were business experts. One of Kelly's appointments, James McCahey, who was elected the new board president, said "I am an advocate of the strictest economies in the school system."<sup>18</sup> This

self description was soon to be proven correct. Many groups thought that the board should make additional cuts in the budget and as the number of groups increased, the pressure on the board to do that also increased. On 12 July 1933, the Chicago Board of Education made additional sweeping cuts in its budget that changed the entire school system. The ten economy-minded members of the board made no pretense of listening to objections to any of their plans. At the time of the regular meeting on 12 July, the board held a closed door session from which they excluded board member Helen Heffernan, who opposed the budget reduction, and William J. Bogan, the superintendent of schools.<sup>19</sup> Both of these people waited with a large crowd for the public portion of the meeting.

Among the changes that were made at that meeting were the abolishment of Crane Junior College and the entire junior high school system, a 50 percent reduction in kindergarten and physical education programs, the existing teacher program and all band instruction were discontinued and an increase in the teaching assignments of all high school teachers to seven periods per day was mandated. The administration of the schools was altered as the number of assistant superintendents were reduced from five to three and district superintendent from ten to five. The work load of principals was doubled as each principal was made responsible for two schools. One-half of the principals were dismissed and reassigned as teachers. In addition,

fourteen hundred teachers were to be dismissed.<sup>20</sup> There were additional cuts in the budget by the board at the administrative level. All of the reductions made by the board of education permanently dismantled the educational program of the Chicago schools.

The president of the board of education, McCahey, stated that the budget reductions in the educational programs were permanent and not temporary reductions due to the financial crisis. The board president viewed these reductions as desirable and said that "after the cuts are in effect, it will be found that the effectiveness of the educational programs will be increased rather than decreased."<sup>21</sup> The small gains that had been made in the past, that had been won by so many people working so hard, were destroyed in that single day.

The board insisted that the only alternative to the cuts was the closing of the public schools. The board also maintained that the cuts only eliminated unnecessary expenses and frills. The board stated further that "investigations disclosed that support was lent to the statement that the school system has accumulated many of these fads and frills or extracurricular activities and embellishments."<sup>22</sup>

#### THE PRINCIPALS' CLUB AND THE REDUCTIONS

The membership of the Chicago Principals' Club was

quick to react to the budget reduction made by the Chicago school board. The principals' long standing posture of obedience and support to the actions and policies of the school board came to a sudden and complete halt. The budget reductions made by the school board threatened the existence of the principals' livelihood and the existence of the club. It was the unanimous decision of the principals to stand and to openly challenge the board and the political system that controlled them. The principals decided to use the courts and the pressure of community organizations to influence the board to rescind the budget reductions.

The impact of the budget reductions on the lives of one-half of the principals and the uncertain nature of how the dismissal of principals was to be implemented enraged the principals. Who was to be removed from their position as principal and what were the criteria were not addressed when the board took their action. The board had made the actual dollar reductions in the budget but had not made specific recommendations as to who would be replaced. At a special meeting of the board of directors of the club it was suggested that "seniority might be used as the criteria or that political connections would be a factor or possibly some principals might be released who the board thought needed to be disciplined." The work of the principal had doubled, the teaching force to educate the children had been greatly reduced and every school would lose teachers and much needed programs were eliminated. The principals

decided to take action.<sup>23</sup>

On 13 July 1933 a special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Chicago Principals' Club was called. There were to be many such meetings after this date and many more meetings of the general membership of the club. All of the members of the board of directors agreed to seek an immediate injunctions preventing the budget reduction actions of the board. The president of the club was given "the authority to protect the tenure rights of the principals by whatever legal procedures were necessary."<sup>24</sup> On 15 July 1933 the general membership, at a special meeting, agreed that each principal would contribute one hundred dollars to a legal fund to bring litigation against the school board. Mr. John Carter was employed by the club to advance this litigation at the rate of one hundred dollars per day.<sup>25</sup> The fact that the principals had not been paid or had been paid in scrip and were counting every penny, had pledged to pay the one hundred dollars certainly speaks loudly as to their commitment to the legal action and underlines their resolution to fight. Principals were making an average of four thousand dollars per year at this time and the one hundred dollars was a great deal of money for them to commit to this action.

The president of the Chicago Principals' Club, Aaron Kline, expressed his feeling about the posture that the club should adopt and the reasons for the board actions when he said "one can not fight with the white flag out in front.

Political jobbery is what the board of education wants. One purpose of the board appears to be reduce to the educational opportunities to the common man."<sup>26</sup>

The officers and members of the board of directors met with many of the other groups of employees who were affected by the budget reductions and tried to coordinate their efforts into a united action. The club did, however, continue activities by itself and divided responsibilities among special committees that were established to meet these needs. It was necessary to communicate to all of the members and to keep them informed of recent actions and activities. The board of directors or the general membership met almost on a daily basis. The club also participated and organized mass rallies and met with individual small groups in private meetings places and in the individual schools in every part of the city. A daily use of the newspapers and the radio was mounted to bring the message to all of the citizens of Chicago. Meetings were scheduled with aldermen, members of the state general assembly and the governor of the state.

One of the committees established by the club was one that was concerned with rumors. The function of this committee was to deal with information that had no traceable reference but was being talked about among the people. These rumors often inflamed a situation and the club members felt it was necessary to deal with them. The function of this committee illustrates the length that the club was willing

to go to achieve information and to organize their plans. At the 17 August general membership meeting, there were two rumors to illustrate the usefulness of this committee. The first rumor was that the police had not provided protection for the people at the mass meeting, which the club had organized, at the stadium. The rumor was judged false by the people who were at the rally. The second rumor was that the Catholic Church was supporting the budget reduction made by the board. A member said that was untrue and cited the statement of the new president of Loyola University who said, "he deplored the backward step taken by the City of Chicago and the Chicago Board of Education."<sup>27</sup> The committee was to function for many months to come.

The 17 August 1933 meeting of the general membership was a turning point for the club and the principals of Chicago. For the first time a decision was made to investigate the possibility of forming a union of principals. A discussion ensued which centered around the issue of whether principals were labor or bosses. It was decided that the club would proceed, in an informal manner, to explore the possibility of an affiliation with the American Federation of Labor as a local chapter of principals. As Mr. Tate, a principal in attendance at the meeting, said, "the economic pinch had brought us all into a different frame of mind."<sup>28</sup> This affiliation was accomplished with the American Federation of Labor and the club did become an association at a much later date.

As the opening of school in Spetember 1933 came closer it became apparent to the principals that the budget reductions would be implemented. As each of the court cases was heard and each of them, in turn, was dismissed and the injunctions that were sought were being denied, the unavoidable was realized and accepted. Two separate actions by the club seemed to indicate acceptance of this fact. On 7 September 1933 the club voted that "all principals of record as of June 9, 1933 be recognized by the club as principals in good standing regardless of actions by the board of education."<sup>29</sup> The second action that was taken was a statement which said that "all officers and heads of committee shall be retained regardless of the actions of the board of education." These two actions indicated that even though the Chicago Board of Education had dismissed over one hundred thirty principals, the Chicago Principals' Club still considered all of them as principals within the club and entitled to participate in all of the benefits and activities of the club. This act was a show of compassion and unity by the club. This act also indicated that the club was going to defend all of its members without notice to the actions of the board of education.<sup>30</sup>

On 13 September 1933, the Chicago Board of Education took the necessary second action to complete the budget reductions started on 13 July 1933. "One hundred forty-five principals last assigned to elementary schools have been placed on an eligible or waiting list from which they may be



reemployed as vacancies occur."<sup>31</sup> All of the principals who were demoted were reassigned as teachers. The attorney for the club advised that all of the demoted principals report for work as teachers or face lose of their job.<sup>32</sup>

Two factors were to determine the actions of the Chicago Principals' Club concerning their attempts to pursue litigation against the Chicago Board of Education. Both of these factors were based on the cold hard facts of reality and in no way could the emotionalism of the past few weeks be used to determine actions.

The first of these two factors was the opinion of the club attorney, Mr. William Carter. Mr. Carter and the general membership met on 28 September 1933 to review the merits of filing a law suit against the board. Dealing with the issue of tenure, Mr. Carter said that he might take such a case as this but that "a matter of policy of the economic situation and the general psychology of the public at this time are against a favorable opinion."<sup>33</sup> When asked a direct question about what was the proper time for a law suit to be brought, Mr. Carter said, "not now, no court actions should be taken."<sup>34</sup> The club discussed the situation after Carter left the meeting and decided to table a motion to institute a law suit.

The second factor that the club had to consider was that of money. At the meeting of 28 September 1933, Mrs. Katherine Steinmetz said of the law suit, "this is no time to go ahead in view of the stringent circumstances of the

membership of the club."<sup>35</sup> A comparison of the club budgets for 1933 and 1934 will explain her comment. In 1933 the total club budget was \$15,347 of which \$9,543 was a cash balance. In 1934 the budget was \$9,450 with a projected income of \$8,829 and no cash reserve.<sup>36</sup> The cash balance had been used to pay the expenses of the activities of the club in their fight with the board. The club had no money to start any litigation and was short of money to meet its operating expenses for the next year. Once again, other means had to be found to achieve the club's goals or the club had to return to business as usual with the Chicago Board of Education.

#### THE BOARD REACTS TO CRITICISM

After the budget cuts were made, the board then turned its attention to those who opposed its actions. The board stated "considerable agitation against this program of economy and efficiency was stirred up by certain interests and the facts wilfully or ignorantly misrepresented." In the same publication, the board continued, "even now for reasons which are known by many and suspected by more, agitation continues through at a constantly diminishing source." There was more hope in this statement than fact.<sup>37</sup>

The people of Chicago were quick to react to this board action. In fact, on the very day of the board's action, citizens formed the "Save Our Schools Committee."

Two weeks later the committee had three hundred fifty thousand signatures on a petition which demanded that the Chicago Board of Education immediately rescind their action. The Save Our Schools Committee, later to be named the Citizens School Committee, the teachers and other civic organizations set on a course of a prolonged campaign against the board of education and its actions. This coalition was not successful in achieving their goals. They were, however, successful in mobilizing thousands of Chicago citizens to take some form of action if it only were attending a rally or meeting. They failed to have any impact on the mayor or the board of education.

The board ignored all efforts of these groups and opened the schools in September 1933 with all of the budget cuts in place. Confusion was the order of the day as the schools attempted to make order of the situation. In November the board issued a small booklet that went home with every child in the schools, entitled, "Our Public Schools Must Not Close." The board justified, in the booklet, that the reductions were necessary and that they would lead to greater stability in the schools and to a reduction in taxes.

There can be little doubt that the damage done to the Chicago schools in 1933 was complete. One national study, made in 1937, stated, "The drive (against school service) had not in any other city, been so demoralizing as it has been in Chicago."<sup>38</sup> Robert Maynard Hutchens of the

University of Chicago, in a signed editorial in the Herald Examiner on 16 July, 1933 declared that the board action was,

"either based on a complete misunderstanding of the purpose of public education, a self-determination that its purpose shall not be fulfilled, or an ignorant belief that a system which had been crushed can still function."

Later in that same editorial, he stated that "the economic and social conditions of Chicago will be worse for twenty-five years because of what the board of education has done." Charles Judd accused the board of "going back to medievalism."<sup>39</sup>

The board of education had the support of Mayor Kelly in their actions. Kelly had appointed the members and it can be assumed that they voted as he instructed them to vote. Kelly continually said that he had no influence or power over the board or its actions. But a few days later, after the budget reductions, he said "the board members have been appointed to serve the best interests of the school children and the people of Chicago. It is their job and responsibility."<sup>40</sup> Nothing in this statement is critical of the board members or their actions and therefore must be viewed as supportive.

## THE 1934 BUDGET

When the 1934 school budget was made public in December 1933, it became a source of bitter struggle and contention. With all of the budget reductions in 1933, the budget in 1934 was still short about fifteen million dollars. The schools would have to close if additional money could not be infused into the budget.

The meetings of the budget committee for 1934 had public hearings about the proposed budget. The executive secretary of the Principals' Club attended all of the meetings and provided the members with first hand information about this budget and the process to approve it. Mr. Wolf, the executive secretary, cast some doubt on the budget when he reported that "It is evident that generous cushions are being built in to business and maintenance, but not evident in the instructional costs."<sup>41</sup> Mr. Wolf also noted that there had been a shift in the tone and methods used in the meeting when compared to the 12 July 1933 meeting when the budget cuts were made. "The board was courteous and respectful in the public hearings. Full cooperation was extended in getting speakers on the docket."<sup>42</sup>

A special session of the 58th General Assembly was called on 13 February 1934, to deal with the problems facing all of the schools in Illinois. The demand for help for all schools over all the state was so general that it was clear

to everyone that something must and would be done. Increased funding did come to Chicago from a flat grant for elementary and high school students and a half percent increase in the motor fuel tax allocated to the schools and and allocation from the Retailers Occupational Tax was made to the schools.

The Chicago Principals' Club pressed for the return of one principal to each school in the city. Most of the activities in this cause were through concerned organizations and with members of line organization of the school system. However, on 24 March 1934 the president of the club, Aaron Kline, sent a letter to each member of the board of education. Kline wrote, "The Chicago Principals' Club respectfully requests your consideration of the proposal to establish a school system with a principal in every school."<sup>43</sup> Kline indicated that the cost of the move would be just under \$160,000 and requested that the board give it every consideration. The tone of the letter is once again that of earlier times when the principals were completely dominated by the members of the board and ran like rabbits when a fight began. When the board of education passed the 1934 budget, it quietly provided for the opening of the city colleges and also returned one principal to each elementary school.

#### FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

It was the federal government that helped to solve the

financial problems of the schools in Chicago for the short run. A federal bill was passed which authorized the board of education of any city having a population of more than five hundred thousand, to mortgage certain of its lands as security for bonds to be sold to any agency with the approval of three-quarters of the board. After a court battle, the right to sell the bonds was established and the Chicago Board of Education sold twenty-six million dollars of these bonds.

On 27 August 1934 school employees lined up at 130 North Wells and received seven and one-half months of back pay in cash. In fifty-two months they had received eight pay checks on time and almost four months of paper in lieu of paychecks.<sup>44</sup>

#### THE CLUB SURVIVES

The Chicago principals and their club experienced many adversities after the 12 July 1933 meeting of the board of education. The club became active in the effort to save the principalship and the educational system of Chicago. Between the budget reduction meeting and June of 1934, the board of directors of the club had met fourteen times and the general membership had met thirty-three times. If this can be used as a measure of involvement in the effort to change the events of time, the club was certainly involved.<sup>45</sup>

Dramatic changes impacted the club. One-half of their membership had been eliminated from their jobs and the finances of the club had been drastically reduced. There were only one hundred one members, out of the three hundred sixty-three, who had paid their dues in full and many of the members who lost their jobs paid nothing after that event. Perhaps the lack of success of the club and certainly other groups who fought the reductions, caused this action.

The club, however, did survive all of these events and did carry out all of their regular activities during this time. The Chicago Principals' Club Reporter was published and the directory was also put into the hands of the principals. The club did pursue an aggressive legislative and public information effort to bring about change in the system. The executive secretary was still on the payroll of the club and provided the needed efforts to assist the club in its activities. The social events during this time, however, were totally curtailed and were to resume in the fall of 1934.

The one person most responsible for the direction and leadership of the club during this time was its president, Aaron Kline. Mr. Kline's contributions to the club were recognized as "the most faithful and sacrificing for the club."<sup>46</sup> Kline was in attendance at each meeting of the board of directors and general membership of the club. The annual budget of the Chicago Board of Education was to be come a trial for the Chicago Principals' Club and the



membership as it was presented each year. The board's financial problems had not yet been solved. There were additional budgets to come and not enough money to fund them.

The 1935 budget was also in doubt when it was presented to the public. There was enough money for the December payroll but it was not certain until the day it was distributed. The proposed budget was six and one-half million dollars short of taxes than were anticipated. The state legislature took action that helped solve this financial crisis. Additional funds came to the board from an increase from the general distribution fund, grants were made to special education and the board was released from paying off warrants issued in 1932 until those taxes were collected. Also, a special legislative session distributed monies from the Retail Occupational Tax monthly rather than the quarterly payments and these additional sources provided the funds for the Chicago schools to open with a balanced budget. The Chicago Principals' Club issued a News Bulletin on 17 September 1934 and declared that the

Educational skies are now considerably brighter. The payment of our delayed salaries ushered in a happier day. Our elementary schools can better serve the children of Chicago, because of the return of the well trained leaders to so many principalships. The event is an epic in the history of our schools.<sup>47</sup>

It is obvious from this statement that there had been no

understanding on the part of the principals' club as to what had happened to them and why. Instead of anger and contempt for the forces that totally disrupted their lives and profession, the club issued a statement that can only reinforce the negative image of the club. The members of the club acted like the rabbits that one board member had described them at an earlier time.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSIONS

The Chicago Principals' Club existed in an environment that was dominated by political influence and controlled by economic and business interests of the City of Chicago. The Chicago Board of Education also operated in that same world which was dominated by the same political forces but was also dramatically influenced by the economic, social and cultural conditions of a changing population and city. From its very inception, the Principals' Club was never able to influence the political or business interests to make the role of the principal more meaningful or important. Nor was it able to influence the authorities within the administrative organization of the board to allow them to participate in the decision making process.

The acceptance of these facts developed a perception among the principals of having little authority beyond their own schools and no security within their position. This perception also mandated the complete acceptance of authority and control of the line officers within the administrative structure of the schools and developed among

the principals a reverence for the authority of the members of the board of education. Several reasons for these two perceptions can be found in the backgrounds of the principals and the process by which they were chosen for their jobs and retained them.

Three specific reasons could explain why principals developed a silent approach to their professional responsibilities and a complaint attitude. The backgrounds of most principals indicated that they had immigrant parents and that they viewed their position with a European mentality. This perception demanded that principals accept a life of poverty and hard work in exchange for respect and self-satisfaction. Complete respect for authority was also built into this train of thought. A second reason was that at the turn of the century, the general superintendent of schools took charge of the school system, rather than the board of education. This change was a general trend that was nationwide and transferred the responsibility for operating the schools from the members of the board of education to a general superintendent. Principals were intimidated by a strong superintendent. Thirdly, principals were appointed to their positions each year by the board of education. The uncertainty of their job would influence any group of people to behave in a manner that would not offend the hiring agency.

These three conditions impacted upon the principals and developed a group of professional who were afraid to act

in any manner other than to accept what was given to them with a stoic silence and to comply with any directive or regulation. At times, the Principals' Club would assert itself and write letters to make suggestions or request. But, these actions were almost always ignored and little was done about the concerns that were expressed by the club. This attitude would be pervasive in all of the Principals' Club activities and must be kept in perspective when reviewing the activities and actions of the club during later years.

In October of 1899 the Chicago Principals' Club was organized and became one of the first employee groups of the Chicago Board of Education to accomplish this event. It is unclear as to exactly which groups came together to form the club, but what is definite is that the club was dominated by the white, male, elementary school principals. This group of principals were the most numerous within the system and they wrote and approved the constitution and bylaws of the club. Discussions by this group indicate that their original intent was to include teachers in the organization but upon further consideration the idea was rejected. The reason for this rejection must be assumed to be the composition of the committee that established the membership criteria and the members who voted for it.

The high school principals did not join the club and were not members until 1934 when a special auxiliary was formed which only included their members. The choice of not



to join the club was based on the fact elementary principals had dominance in the membership of the club and the social and monetary differences between the two groups of principals. The opportunity to join was always extended to the high school principals by the club but was taken advantage of by only some of the high school principals.

The constitution and bylaws established a club whose central governing board had no authority. The local auxiliaries retained all of the authority and acted independently of the central organization. Because of the relationship between the principals and their employers, the principals did not perceive of a need for a centralized, unifying organization. The principals' authority and power was at the local level and that is where they wanted it kept. The main focus of the activities of the club was of a local nature. Little was done in an attempt by the group to speak for all of the principals.

During the next decade the educational system in Chicago operated in an atmosphere of conflict. The city struggled to create an educational system for a dramatically increasing population and basic questions about control and directions of the schools created bitter and lasting controversies. The labor movement, spearheaded by a newly formed teachers organization, supported and fought for expansion of educational programs and higher taxes. The business community was opposed to these ideas as they were cost conscience and supported programs that were intended to

limit the educational system in scope and dollar amounts.

The outcomes of these struggles between labor and business were never predictable. The educational system in Chicago is a history of struggle, compromise and resistance and not one of domination by any one group or movement. The effect and perception of class was an open issue during these times. The participants in the educational conflicts described themselves in terms of class objectives, antagonism or objects. The workers wanted the same type of educational curriculum as the elite population. The workers viewed vocational education as an attempt to deny them an opportunity to improve their lives. The junior high schools and the platoon system were viewed in exactly the same way by the working class and for exactly the same reasons.

The Chicago Principals' Club did not participate in any of the struggles or confrontations between labor and business during this time period. The posture and philosophy of management of Superintendent Cooley plus his acquisition of authority over the board of education totally intimidated and dominated the principals and their club. The organizational structure of the club, with a weak central structure, did not lend itself to deal effectively with any of the issues of the system as a whole or of the city. The principals had designed a club that was directed to the solving of local problems and preserving the small power domain of each principal.

The club grew at a slow rate during this ten year

period. Membership varied little from year-to-year and the meetings were not held on a regular basis. Attendance at the meetings also was small. This was a time of development for the club. The emphasis of the club was one of a social nature and provided an avenue for the principals to enjoy dinner rather than cope with the hard issues of the time. With the election of Ella Flagg Young as superintendent in 1909, this trend was to cease and a new direction was taken by the club members.

The struggle between business interests and labor intensified during the next decade. The teachers as a part of the labor movement saw the proposed reorganization of the Chicago schools as an issue of democracy. The teachers wanted a share in the decision making process and a more open school system and were ready to fight for it. The members of the board of education saw the alliance of the teachers with organized labor as a source of conflict within the schools. The selection of Ella Flagg Young as superintendent and her democratic management philosophy was viewed by the board as an answer to this situation. The board members were to change their mind on two separate occasions after she was hired.

The Principals' Club changed its posture of compliance with authority with the hiring of Young. The club was a part of the administration of Cooley and took no active role in the labor management struggle. The club did try to influence the board to hire Young and wrote letters on her

behalf and again supported her when she resigned the first time.

In September 1910 a major reform was adapted by the club. Local authority was replaced with a stronger central governing body that worked for all principals and spoke for them in their interests and that of common educational problems. Monthly meetings were mandated and the club was open every day to all principals. Club members were assigned to twenty-seven different committees which dealt with the problems of education or improving the position of principals. The club joined other educational groups and published a journal, the Chicago Principals' Club Reporter.

The club also became involved in the legislative process and helped pass the Otis Law, which it viewed as a means to break from the political influences that dominated their position. The decade between 1910 and 1920 saw the club take an active interest in the education community and attempt to influence the educational process. How much influence the labor movement and the confrontation between management and labor had on the club is hard to determine but there must have been some to generate these changes within the club. The principals did not operate in a vacuum and the issues of labor and the demands of management must have generated some of the activity of the club.

In the 1920s the differences between labor and management became acute. The superintendency of William McAndrew brought social efficiency to a point of absurdity.

McAndrew battled the teachers and the labor movement. He lost the position of superintendent through the intervention of politicians who used his unpopular ideas to gain popularity and publicity.

Throughout this period of time, the principals' club supported McAndrew and his policies. He was aggressive in his desire to support the principals and wrote an article in almost every issue of the club's journal. The principals' club made no public statement when the teachers' councils were abolished and when the superintendent reorganized the committee structure of the board of education. They supported the platoon system and the junior high school program. However, the principals must have been keenly aware of the fact that the partnership with the general superintendent could easily end if they did take stands that were contrary to his wishes. The club did not challenge any of his programs and certainly were intimidated by the personality and power of this superintendent. Silence about an act or decision certainly implies consent and agreement with the act or decision. All through his trial the club made no mention of it in the journal or the executive sessions and only issued a ten line statement in the journal when McAndrew was fired.

The internal structure of the club changed dramatically during the period from 1920 to 1930. The club increased its membership and its financial position, changed the bylaws and reorganized the governing board, hired a

full-time special secretary and elected its first female president. Most of these events took place during the presidency of Rose Pesta. The club wished to become a strong, efficient and aggressive organization that could influence educational change. These ambitions were never realized. The financial situation of the board of education almost destroyed the Chicago Public Schools and with it the principals' club.

The financial policies of the board of education had led it to the brink of total disaster and threaten to shut down the system as early as 1930. The change from a cash to a credit system of fiscal management and the emergence of a national depression spelled disaster for the Chicago schools. All of the mirrors and accounting tricks that had been used to balance the budget were no longer available. From the financial quagmire of this time, the Democratic party emerged and took over Chicago and the schools for the next five decades.

The depression forced reductions in the school budget as they had to be balanced and stability had to be restored to the financial structure. The situation did not improve and warrants could not be sold and scrip was issued. As the depression became deeper and widened, it became evident that reduction had to be made. In 1933, the board of education made reductions that destroyed the educational system of Chicago. As part of the budget reductions, one-half of all principals were fired and returned to the position of

teacher. The principal's position of support for school board policies came to a sudden halt. The reductions threatened the existence of the principals and the club. The club decided to take legal action to stop the reductions and to use pressure from community organizations to rescind board actions.

The principals' club expended all of its cash reserves to pursue legal activities and to support group meetings to secure community pressure. The club united with any group of people which they thought would support them. All of their activities, however, would not change the situation. Each of the court cases were dismissed and the board of education did not change its decisions. However, in the beginning of the controversy, the club was determined to fight and this was a new posture for them.

As it became evident that their cause was hopeless, the club returned to its previous position and attempted to work from within the accepted structure to affect change. From these events, the seeds were planted for the principals to begin to discuss the need to become stronger and to become affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and to become a union of administrators. It was not until some forty years later that this was to occur. It must be noted that through all of the financial difficulties of the era, the Chicago Principals' Club did survive and go on to rebuild a viable organization.

To understand the Chicago Principals and the Chicago

Principals' Club, we must understand the heritage of the principals as they assumed their positions and the social, economic and political environment which influenced them and which they attempted to change.

The principals came to their positions with a European value system that stressed hard work and complete acceptance of authority. The principals operated in an environment that was charged with struggle. Teachers united with the labor movement. The labor movement wanted better schools as they viewed educations as a means to improve themselves. Business wanted schools to produce good factory workers but were not willing to pay for education as it cut into profits. The politicians worked both sides of the fence to ensure their power base.

It is difficult to understand the actions and activities of the principals without a complete understanding of all of the circumstances that affected the principals from both within and from without of the schools system. Principals were victims of those who worked to secure their own political and economic advantage. The Chicago principals never had the strength to obtain their goals or to obtain its visions of improvement of schooling. This is not to say or imply that gains were not made or that principals did not influence the educational scene because they were involved in the process and it is impossible to measure actual contributions of the parts to the success of the whole. Principals and their club were a part of the



struggle to make Chicago schools a better system.

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## APPENDIX

OFFICERS OF THE CHICAGO PRINCIPALS' CLUB 1899-1935.

1899-1903

Homer Bevans	President
George W. Davis	Secretary
George A. Osinga	Treasurer

1903-1904

James E. Armstrong	President
George A. Osinga	Secretary
George Davis	Treasurer

1904-1906

George Osinga	President
E.C. Rosseter	Vice-President
A.E. Butts	Recording Secretary
Harriet N. Winchell	Corresponding Secretary
Clarence O. Scudder	Treasurer

1906-1908

E.C. Rosseter	President
C.W. Minnard	Vice-President
A.E. Butts	Secretary
Clarence Scudder	Treasurer

1908-1910

W.H. Campbell	President
Harriet N. Winchell	Vice-President
Mary E. Tobin	Secretary
Chester Dodge	Treasurer



1910-1912

Avon S. Hall	President
Harriet N. Winchell	First Vice-President
William Bartholf	Second Vice-President
Chester Dodge	Treasurer
Mary E. Fellows	Secretary
A.B. Wight	Corresponding Secretary

1911-1912

Avon S. Hall	President
Harriet N. Winchell	First Vice-President
William Bartholf	Second Vice-President
Abbey E. Lane	Third Vice-President
Mary E. Fellows	Secretary
Chester Dodge	Treasurer
A.B. Wight	Corresponding Secretary

1912-1913

Morgan G. Hogge	President
Harriet N. Winchell	First Vice-President
Abbey E. Lane	Second Vice-President
William Bartholf	Third Vice-President
Chester C. Dodge	Treasurer
Mathilda N. Niehaus	Secretary
A.B. Wright	Corresponding Secretary

1913-1914

Morgan G. Hogge	President
Harriet N. Winchell	First Vice-President
Ida Cook	Second Vice-President
William Bartholf	Third Vice-President
Chester C. Dodge	Treasurer
Etta Q. Gee	Secretary
A.B. Wight	Corresponding Secretary

1914-1915

Morgan G. Hogge	President
Harriet N. Winchell	First Vice-President
William Bartholf	Second Vice-President
Chester C. Dodge	Treasurer
Etta Q. Gee	Secretary
A.B. Wight	Corresponding Secretary

1915-1916

John H. Stube	President
Harriet N. Winchell	First Vice-President
William Bartholf	Second Vice-President
Etta Q. Gee	Third Vice-President
Chester C. Dodge	Treasurer
Mary J. Zollman	Secretary
William Hedges	Corresponding Secretary

1916-1917

John H. Stube	President
Martha V. Bishop	First Vice-President
William Bartholf	Second Vice-President
Etta Q. Gee	Third Vice-President
Chester C. Dodge	Treasurer
Mary J. Zollman	Secretary
William Hedges	Corresponding Secretary

1917-1918

C.E. Debutts	President
Martha V. Bishop	First Vice-President
William Bartholf	Second Vice-President
Dora Wells	Third Vice-President
Chester C. Dodge	Treasurer
Carrie F. Patterson	Secretary
William Hedges	Corresponding Secretary

1918-1919

Chester C. Dodge	President
Cora Caverno	First Vice-President
William Bartholf	Second Vice-President
Dora Wells	Third Vice-President
Walter J. Harrower	Treasurer
Carrie F. Patterson	Secretary
James E. McDade	Corresponding Secretary

1919-1920

Chester C. Dodge	President
Cora Caverno	First Vice-President
Dora Wells	Second Vice-President
John A. Long	Third Vice-President
Esther P. Hornbaker	Secretary
Walter J. Harrower	Treasurer
James E. McDade	Corresponding Secretary

1920-1921

Fred E. Smith	President
Esther J.W. Barker	First Vice-President
Augustus R. Dillon	Second Vice-President
Lucy I. Laing	Third Vice-President
Mary E. Fellows	Secretary
William R. Hornbaker	Treasurer
George A. Osinga	Corresponding Secretary

1921-1922

Fred E. Smith	President
Lucy I. Laing	First Vice-President
Augustus R. Dillon	Second Vice-President
Rose A. Pesta	Third Vice-President
Mary E. Fellows	Secretary
William R. Hornbaker	Treasurer
George A. Osinga	Corresponding Secretary

1922-1923

Rose A. Pesta	President
Daniel J. Beeby	First Vice-President
Avon S. Hall	Second Vice-President
Isabella Dolton	Third Vice-President
Robert G. Jeffery	Secretary
George Beers	Corresponding Secretary
William J. Harrower	Treasurer

1923-1924

Rose A. Pesta	President
Daniel J. Beeby	First Vice-President
Robert G. Jeffery	Second Vice-President
William J. Harrower	Treasurer
Donald G. Rogers	Special Secretary

1924-1925

George A. Beers	President
Daniel J. Beeby	First Vice-President
Christine Bednar	Second Vice-President
William J. Harrower	Treasurer
Donald C. Rogers	Special Secretary

1925-1926

George A. Beers	President
Daniel J. Beeby	First Vice-President
Isabel Dolton	Second Vice-President
Mary G. Guthrie	Secretary
William J. Harrower	Treasurer
Donald C. Rogers	Special Secretary

1926-1927

Daniel J. Beeby	President
Jane A. Neil	First Vice-President
Herbert C. Hansen	Second Vice-President
Evelyn F. Colby	Secretary
William J. Harrower	Treasurer
Alice E. Scott	Editor
E.L. Keezel	Special Secretary

1927-1928

Daniel J. Beeby	President
Jane A. Neil	First Vice-President
Herbert C. Hansen	Second Vice-President
Evelyn F. Colby	Secretary
William J. Harrower	Treasurer
Alice E. Scott	Editor
E.L. Keezel	Special Secretary

1928-1929

Herbert C. Hansen	President
Jane A. Neil	First Vice-President
Irvin A. Wilson	Second Vice-President
Edna R. Meyers	Secretary
William J. Harrower	Treasurer
Katherine S. Rueff	Editor
E.L. Keezel	Special Secretary

1929-1930

Herbert C. Hansen	President
Irvin A. Wilson	First Vice-President
Katherine S. Rueff	Second Vice-President
Edna R. Meyers	Secretary
William J. Harrower	Treasurer
Mary G. Guthrie	Editor
E.L. Keezel	Special Secretary until 12/30
James E. Armstrong	Special Secretary

1930-1931

Irvin A. Wilson	President
Katherine S. Rueff	First Vice-President
Arthur M. Nichelson	Second Vice-President
John W. Bell	Secretary
William J. Harrower	Treasurer
Mary G. Guthrie	Editor
James E. Armstrong	Special Secretary

1931-1932

Irvin A. Wilson	President
Katherine S. Rueff	First Vice-President
Arthur M. Nichelson	Second Vice-President
Kathryn E. Steinmetz	Secretary
William J. Harrower	Treasurer
Mary R. Hanlon	Editor
James E. Armstrong	Special Secretary

1932-1933

Aaron S. Kline	President
Katherine S. Rueff	First Vice-President
Arthur M. Nichelson	Second Vice-President
Claude L. Williams	Secretary
William J. Harrower	Treasurer until 2/32
William H. Spurgin	Treasurer
Mary R. Hanlon	Editor
James E. Armstrong	Executive Secretary

1933 - 1934

Aaron S. Kline	President
Katherine S. Rueff	First Vice-President
Arthur M. Nichelson	Second Vice-President
Claude L. Williams	Secretary
William H. Spurgin	Treasurer
Amy Bowman	Editor
James E. Armstrong	Executive Secretary

1934-1935

Arthur M. Nichelson	President
Philip Carlin	First Vice-President
George A. Anapaugh	Second Vice-President
Isabel D. Annan	Secretary
William H. Spurgin	Treasurer
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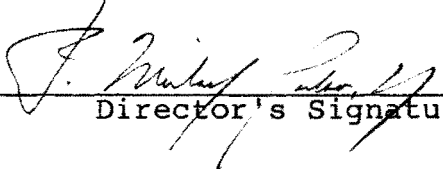
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Associate Professor, Educational Leadership and  
Policy Studies, Loyola

Dr. Joan K. Smith  
Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy  
Studies; and Associate Dean, Graduate School,  
Loyola

Dr. Max Baily  
Associate Professor, Educational Leadership and  
Policy Studies, Loyola

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verify 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.

8 December 1988  
Date

  
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Director's Signature