

THE POLITICAL ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN COMMUNITY/SCHOOL  
SYSTEM RELATIONS

by

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(ABSTRACT)

As educational resources dwindle, school principals are increasingly finding themselves functioning as mediators in financial matters affecting their community and school system. How principals function in this role may impact on perceptions of their effectiveness and on the resources their schools receive. Principals functioning in this capacity need to be studied to identify effective and ineffective strategies for this political role.

The purpose of this study is to determine whether notable differences in strategies can be identified between a principal in a school which was allocated more resources and one in a school receiving less. The study is a case analysis of two neighborhoods, in the same school district, that petitioned their school board for an increased allocation of

resources. The behaviors of the two principals, their relationships with members of the neighborhoods and with the school system will be examined. By identifying these relationships and key behaviors, insights to effective strategies for principals to use when assisting communities that are petitioning school systems for additional resources are obtained.

The data add specifics to the literature which offers only general, vague, and abstract guidelines as to what principals should do to function politically. The principal in the study who understood his community's needs and worked in a consultative manner to keep them focused, was perceived as open, supportive, and effective. On the other hand, the principal who failed to assist his community in framing the issue in terms of school board policy, and failed to provide certain kinds of information about the school system to the community, was perceived as ineffective, even though he took a much more active role in the task force. The data also confirmed the complexity of the principal's political function in maintaining a balance between community and school system.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Politics should be kept out of education.  
Education should be kept out of politics....While  
both are accepted views, neither is accurate nor  
possible. (Locke, 1974, p. vii)

The school principal is often involved, like it or not, in political issues, because many, if not most, of the educational issues for which parents exert pressure involve individual schools. While parents have always been interested in the education of their children, recent increases in parent participation have led to conflict among neighborhood groups vying for limited community resources. Principals, as leaders of their individual schools, cannot escape these conflicts.

These conflicts pit school against school as communities wrestle with such questions as: Which neighborhood school gets renovated? In what order are renovations performed? Which neighborhood school is closed? Which neighborhood has a new school built? Whose children ride the school bus for 45 minutes and whose walk? Which high school offers an expanded program for

gifted students and which one offers an auto mechanics program? The process of reaching answers to these questions is unquestionably complex and political, and must involve the school principal.

When school principals are involved in such conflicts, they often find themselves wedged between loyalty to the school system and loyalty to the school's neighborhood. School board members campaign on the basis of community concerns; superintendents and their senior staffs are hired to deal with these community concerns; parents, on the other hand, campaign for the neighborhood. But, the role of the local principal, designated primarily an instructional leader, is less clear. The question of concern is: how do principals' interactions with neighborhood members and school system representatives have bearing or influence on the resources allocated to their schools?

When resources begin to shrink, conflict over their allocation increases proportionately. Neighborhoods seek to maximize their shares of the shrinking resources, school boards and the superintendent seek to distribute funds equitably, and the school principal has to function as a politician, which is to say as a mediator of conflicts between the neighborhood and the school system.

The effectiveness of principals is increasingly judged by "how (they) view authority, the availability of resources, competition (for these resources), and the utilization of resources" (Wiles, 1981, p. 212). The principals' problem becomes one of finding a way to understand and exploit this facet of their job - the role as a politician within their community and school system.

The literature is extensive on the principal's role as an instructional leader and as a manager, but vague on the principal's political role. Textbooks, training programs and superintendents urge principals to be political, but as Wiles (1981) points out, in his book, Practical Politics of School Administrators, there is only vague understanding among principals, about what "being political" means (p. 2). Wiles (1981) defines politics as the "authoritative allocation of scarce resources" (p. 4) and then discusses the principal's role as decision maker/politician within the school community setting (p. 212). Summerfield (1971) in The Neighborhood-Based Politics of Education similarly contends that it is the principal's constant political function to minimize conflict between the school system, the school, and the community over the allocation of increasingly scarce resources (p. 94). Going one step further,

Nunnery and Kimbrough (1971) state:

educational leadership to upgrade educational standards is political. And if educators and citizens desire changes in school programs, they must be politicians. Performing as a politician to develop quality schools is a perfectly legitimate, statesmanlike activity. (p. 1)

The thrust of these three opinions is that principals must develop an awareness and acceptance of this political function. Yet, the advice is quite general. These authors urge principals to be "visible" and "active" but do not give meaning to visibility or to action. In addition, the advice tends to ignore or minimize the unavoidable confrontation and manipulation -- the political maneuvering -- of school administration (Morris, 1984, p. 2). It also ignores the site-specific dynamics that may make a political style successful in one locale but not in another.

The lack of specific information about principals as political leaders is a major gap in the school administration literature. The literature offers some basic propositions about politics and the allocation of resources in schools, but these reports present the issue in broad terms only and not in the context of daily operations. To proceed beyond the abstract, this

dissertation examines, using a case study approach, the role principals actually play in this process.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine whether notable differences in political behaviors can be identified between a principal in a school which was allocated more resources and one in a school receiving less. To pursue this purpose, the researcher conducted a case analysis of two neighborhoods in the same district that petitioned their school board for an increased allocation of resources. This study compared the behaviors of the two principals and their relationships both with involved members of the neighborhoods and with the school system, as represented by their superiors.

### Research Questions

In order to identify and compare the principals' behavior the following research questions were posed:

1. In what ways do citizens of two neighborhoods in a large suburban school district become political around the allocation of educational resources ?

2. In this situation, what roles are secondary principals in these communities expected to assume by their community members and by their superiors?

3. In what ways do the secondary principals of this school district play these roles?

4. In playing such roles, how are these secondary principals' behaviors judged to be "effective" or "ineffective"?

#### Definition of Terms

The following terms used throughout the study are defined to provide the reader a common base of understanding.

Community: The community is a general term that represents the multifaceted contiguous population of a school district.

Community Leader: A person who actively and voluntarily participates in local school activities or school system activities. Community leaders rally citizens to either support or oppose Board of Education policies.

Community Participation: This term identifies any form of citizen involvement, from residents' control over program planning and administrative decision-making, to the establishment of lay advisory groups, to parental choice among program offerings, to increased participation in parent/teacher councils, to the organization of school volunteers (Fantini, 1970, p. 13).

Neighborhood: The neighborhood is a segment of a community centered around and determined by the boundaries of a senior high school. In the school district of this case study there are twenty-one (21) such neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are often referred to as local school communities.

Politician: A politician is a person who mediates conflict.

Principal: The person appointed by the Board of Education to administer the total functioning of the school. "The principal is the major source of information regarding school programs and activities" (Wood, 1979, p. 72). In the school system under study, principals are directly responsible to an area superintendent. Each area superintendent supervises forty-five principals and reports directly to the superintendent.

Resources: The finite financial supports of a school district as delineated in a school system's operating and capital budgets. School board members are charged with the task of distributing scarce educational resources and as such become "allocators" (Summerfield, 1971, p. 6).

Role Functions: These terms refer to the many hats a principal must wear in order to effectively administer a school. A principal is expected to function as a curriculum expert, a plant manager, a personnel director, a community participant, an interpreter of school system policy, a buffer between school system mandates and

teacher/student/parent needs, a school-community advocate, an energizer, a motivator, a trainer, and a political agent.

School System: The organizational structure that is charged by law to provide an educational program for children from the ages of five to eighteen in a specific county community. This organization is bound to uphold state and federal laws which are designed to provide equality of educational opportunity as well as minimum academic standards for all students within the jurisdiction. In the jurisdiction where this study was conducted, the Board of Education (BOE) is elected locally to operate the county school system. This Board of Education has control over all policy matters that affect its district, including the adoption and recommendation (and later administration) of both a capital and an operating budget. It should be noted that the BOE in this jurisdiction cannot levy taxes and is not a funding agency, and must therefore submit its budgets to the county government for final approval. As a social organization, a school system by definition is political (Cibulka, 1979, p. 85).

### Methodology Overview

Charles Bidwell (1965), after a thorough review of studies examining the organizational nature and needs of schools, concluded:

studies using direct observation, informants, and the analysis of documents are especially needed. Ratings of others' behavior or judgemental nominations, which to date have been the principle sources of material on school operations, are weak substitutes for phenomenological data. (p. 1018)

Bidwell felt that "phenomenological data" went beyond the statistics of a situation and were necessary to interpret fully the why's and how's of people's actions. The case study method is one way to meet Bidwell's requirements: it offers the possibility of in-depth analysis which can preserve the complexity of specific events as they actually occur and unfold over time.

This case study, traces the course of events, occurring during one nine-month period (1983 - 1984), as two neighborhoods petitioned their school board for additional resources. Actions of the principals of the two secondary schools within the community are the primary focus of attention. The Board of Education, at the beginning of this period, appointed a task force composed of community members and school system staff to determine the needs of the area and propose budget recommendations.

The case study followed the sequence of events in the neighborhoods and school system through final budget action.

Ethnographic techniques of data collection were utilized. Data were gathered by this researcher who attended, as a participant observer, community meetings, task force meetings, and board of education meetings. Budget documents, newspaper accounts of events, and board of education minutes were also reviewed. The two principals, community leaders, and the area superintendent were later interviewed using open-ended questions.

Data were analyzed using Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence Method (1980, p. 175) and document analysis techniques as described by Garman (1982). These techniques provided a systematic process for organizing and evaluating all collected data.

#### Limitations of the Study

The case study methodology is limited by both questions of internal and external validity, which is to say the correctness of the interpretations and the generalizability of findings. Triangulation of the data,

"the process of comparing and contrasting information about the same event from different sources" (Garman, 1982, p. 4), is central to its accurate interpretation. In order to validate data sources, they must be analyzed separately, provide similar information, and corroborate each other. For example, newspaper accounts of events should match meeting minutes, just as recollections of interviewees should match the researcher's observation notes. Generally, the extent to which data sources in this study corroborated each other is great; however, some data sources contributed much more to the analysis and interpretation of some categories than others. Where this is true, it is indicated when discussed.

The assumption of the researcher is that these two principals and neighborhoods are to some extent representative of principals and communities in this school district and in similar situations elsewhere; the extent to which this may not be the case is the primary limitation. The concomitant advantage of the method lies, however, in the fullness of specific behaviors and organizational processes which can be captured. The case is illustrative of the complexity which inevitably arises in quests and competitions for limited resources. The specifics of the struggles may vary from situation to

situation but the issue of the conflict will remain a constant; so too, the peculiarities of principal personalities will vary, but again the issue of how the principals involve themselves in the ensuing conflict will be found as a common element from which others can gain insight.

#### Organization of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter includes the following sections: introduction, statement of need, purpose of the study, research questions, definitions, methodological overview and limitations of the study. The second chapter presents a review of the literature on the politics of education and the political role of the principal. The third chapter describes, in detail, the methodology of the study including the selection of schools, definition of the role of fieldworker, data collection, and data analysis. The fourth chapter presents the data and the information gathered from the interviews. The chapter is designed to describe each neighborhood; its social structure, and the

roles of its leaders. Each school and neighborhood is described and comparisons made between the schools, neighborhoods, and principals. The fifth chapter includes the summary, conclusions, and suggestions for future work.

## Chapter 2

### The Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a review of the literature relevant to the role of the community, the role of the school system as represented by the superintendent and senior staff, and the role of the principal in the politics of education. This chapter is divided into the following three sections: first, an historical review of the politics of education including community participation, the role of the school board and superintendent's office, and principal involvement; second, the role of political power in educational decision-making; and, third, guidelines for principals' effective political behavior.

### An Historical Review - The Politics of Education

Since the American revolution, public education in the United States has been politicized. In fact, "the major historical significance of the Revolution for education was that it redefined the meaning of political community" (Butts, 1978, p. 6), not only by establishing a new political system but by designing a new concept of public education that was to teach the new ideal of citizenship and bind the young Republic together so that the entire population would be "a viable political community" (Butts, 1978, p. 6). Led by Thomas Jefferson, our founding fathers felt strongly that the means to convince individuals to place the public good above private needs was through a common education in public schools.

The democratic political community was to be the binding element of social cohesion preserved through public education and oriented toward public purposes...Jefferson thought of 'liberty' very largely in terms of widespread political participation; thus public education should prepare the citizenry for such participation. (Butts, 1978, pp. 364-365)

In turn, the citizens would be taught to take an active political role not only in their government but in their system of education. At this point in time, there were no

principals or superintendents; citizens hired and fired the teachers and determined what would be taught.

However, as the country grew and changed from a rural agrarian society to an urban industrial one, control of schools shifted in response. At first, citizens appointed "head teachers" to monitor programs and assist in school management. Then, as citizens began to demand standardization between schools, the principal as a non-teaching building administrator, and superintendents as general district administrators, came into existence. With these roles came bureaucracy and conflict between citizens and superintendents, with principals placed in the middle, because both groups held the principal accountable for what transpired in the local school. As David Tyack (1974) in his book The One Best System states:

Schools reflected and shaped these changes in various ways. In the governance of education, lay community control gave way to the corporate-bureaucratic model under the guise of 'taking the schools out of politics'. Educators developed school systems whose specialized structures partly reflected the differentiation of economic roles in the larger social order. As employers and occupational associations placed ever greater reliance on educational credentials for jobs, schooling acquired a new importance as the gateway to favored positions. And increasingly the school developed a curriculum, overt and implicit, that served as a bridge between the family and the organizational world beyond. (p. 6)

Gradually the Jeffersonian ideal of community control of schools as seen in rural schools gave way to a centralized urban method of school operations, controlled by professional educators, namely the local school principal and the district superintendent. Community participation was not sought or welcomed; even when someone of the stature of John Dewey (1927) said that "the essential need is the improvement of the methods and conditions of debate, discussion and persuasion (and that) members of an open society must influence those who administer the public (schools)" (p. 208). The principals and superintendents administering the public schools did not want community participation; but, with the arrival of Sputnik in the late 1950's and the resulting attention the Soviets' scientific accomplishment brought to public education for what it was not doing, schools and their professional leaders came under great pressure from citizens who demanded participation in public school affairs.

The public was aroused and angered that their "one best system" as Tyack labeled it was producing inferior results. Schools were losing public confidence; they were not meeting the needs of a rapidly advancing world. Further, schools were not reaching a significant portion

of the population -- namely the poor and minorities. Tyack (1974) summarizes the feelings of this period when he says:

When muckrakers and sober scientists made it increasingly clear that the educational establishment was not fulfilling newly raised expectations, anger and disillusionment erupted, optimism gave way to doubt or despair, and many Americans came to question both the ideology and the institutions of public education. A new crisis was at hand. (p. 271)

Assumptions and practices in education were questioned and everyone, both professional and lay, argued about what and who would "fix" our schools. The most visible and vituperative school system/community clashes took place in New York City between citizens and the school board, with the local principals caught in the middle, trying to be loyal to their employer while, at the same time, trying to assist their neighborhoods. Diane Ravitch (1974), in her book The Great School Wars, details these clashes and relates them to new waves of immigrants entering this country seeking the opportunity espoused in Jefferson's vision of the common school. The clashes came when the expectations of this vision were not present. She summarizes by saying that "the public schools are the common schools of the political community...(and) since people do not agree on which

values, habits and behaviors should be encouraged, school policy will always be controversial" (pp. 402-4). As a side note, Ravitch states that "each major (school) controversy was resolved politically" (p. 401).

Another related issue came from the civil rights movement and the social protests of the 1960's and 1970's: many people came to realize that the schools did not provide equality of opportunity.

Outcast groups eager for power argued that 'keeping the school out of politics' was a smokescreen for elite white rule. Critics of the establishment claimed that the professionals had neither the expertise nor the empathy to design schooling appropriate for all groups. (Tyack, 1974, p. 272)

By the end of the 1970's, proposals for educational changes were plentiful; by the 1980's even a Presidential Commission had declared "The Nation At Risk" because of the state of our schools. It was now the principals' responsibility, in addition to plant management and personnel and instructional supervision, to see that the needs of special groups were identified and addressed in their schools. Principals again found themselves caught between parents and superiors, receiving parental criticisms and having to explain their offerings, procedures, and viewpoints to their communities, while at the same time, conforming to the legal and procedural

directives of the school district, state, and federal governments.

At the same time, in the name of equal educational opportunity, legislatures and courts were encouraging increased community involvement in public schools. The changes stem from the philosophical position that public education is a fundamental individual right:

These changes in the allocation of authority have been brought about in the name of protecting and defending students who local boards have tended to neglect in the past: the handicapped, the non-English speaker, racial minority students, the politically powerless, and many others.  
(Schaffarzick, 1979, p. 63)

For example, on the basis of the landmark 1954 Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education which found inequalities based on race in a segregated school system and mandated equal access to quality education, subsequent federal legislation mandated community participation as a way of ensuring that the needs of special groups be met in schools:

The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 required participation of the poor in making policies and decisions about the actual use of federal money under these laws. The American Indian Educational Act of 1972 required participation of Indian parents in the planning and supervision of any project or program supported under this act.  
(Havighurst, 1970, p. 23)

The Vocational Rehabilitation Act and the Education of the Handicapped Act also mandated parental participation in the design, implementation, and evaluation of individualized programs to meet the diverse needs of children. Many states even passed legislation that would authorize and in some cases mandate community participation. This involvement ranged from forming district advisory councils to setting district goals, evaluating programs, and developing comprehensive long-term district program plans (Davies, 1979, pp. 5-6). The advisory councils were required to be representative of the community and to include parents, citizens, and students at the secondary level. The duties of these councils were to be determined by the local school board but were to avoid infringing upon any of the board's legal powers or duties (Berman, 1980, p. 11). It was estimated that by 1980 over a million and a half people nationally served on these advisory councils (Register, 1980, p. 1).

In these times, school principals have, at once, the responsibility of assuring the individual rights of students and teachers in their schools and of assuring that the needs of the whole school community are met. Increased legislative and court involvement went hand in hand with increased community participation and paralleled

the increase in attention to the principal's political role.

As citizen participation evolved and school boards responded formally to citizen demands for inclusion in school affairs, the attitude of superintendents and their staffs and school principals towards this increased emphasis on community participation has also changed. As a response to citizen political action, a public relations approach to participation was adopted. The assumption was that since basic policy decisions were made by the public, superintendents, generally, and school principals, specifically, were to do everything in their power to inform the people of the community's educational needs. The superintendent was to speak in broad terms about the system as a unit, while the principals were to focus on the particulars of their individual schools. "The voter, it was thought, would exercise his free choice on an informed basis and would be motivated to do something about the situation" (Kimbrough, 1964, p. 3). This approach spawned a new group of educational support experts who created "how to" materials for the school administrator on topics such as "how to advertise the school", and "how to achieve good press relations" (Kimbrough, 1964, p. 3). Unfortunately, as Kimbrough also

states, selling schools "was not in the same category as (selling) a shiny new automobile" (p. 3). Selling a school involved more than operational knowledge, and depended on more than eye-catching gadgetry. Principals had to do more than "show and tell" once a year at parents' night, because the product or lack there of was always visible.

Many researchers recommend this approach to principals. Wood, Nicholson, and Findley (1979), in their recent text, The Secondary Principal: Manager and Supervisor, feel strongly that the key to principals' survival is their ability to communicate with the school's constituents. The burden of that communication rests on the school's public relations program. They strongly state that "support from patrons is directly proportionate to the truthfulness, accuracy, and timeliness of the public relations program" (p. 72). They see the principal as "the major source of information regarding school programs and activities" (p. 72). Davies (1976), from the Institute for Responsive Education, sees the principal as the key figure in making community participation work (p. 52). So does Dale Mann (1973) when he says that in involving communities the principal must "keep the

community informed; build support for the school; (and) organize the school's friends and allies" (p. 2).

To move beyond the public relations approach to community participation, some educators turned to the field of group dynamics:

The democratic process was far more complex than the public relations technique. Educational leaders became entangled in the problem of involving everyone in their plans. Some encouraging studies had shown that involving the people as a group produced desired behavior to a much more satisfactory extent than the one-way or two-way communication approach. Thus, the answers seemed to lie in creating numerous devices to get what is often loosely referred to as the people involved in policy decisions. (Kimbrough, 1964, p. 4)

Citizen advisory groups, committees, and task forces were designed as a vehicle for community participation. As stated earlier, many localities even provided for this type of activity legislatively. Thus, many school principals began to combine public relations and group dynamic techniques.

In summary, as communities, spurred by legislative and court initiatives, have renewed their interest in local schools, the school principal's role has expanded from the initial concept of the principal as the master who instructed all classes, saw to it that the floors were swept, and the wood was chopped, to the person who rode herd over students and teachers by strictly enforcing

discipline standards, to the person responsible for the delivery of instruction, to public relations expert and political agent. The principal of the 1980's is now held accountable for the external needs of the school's community as well as the internal workings of the school. Specifically, it now seems to be the principal's role to: inform the community of educational problems and needs, build bridges between the school staff and the community, address problems of the community that affect the education program, and demonstrate a commitment to work with the community (Cibulka, 1979, pp. 88-89).

Unfortunately, though all of this is "common sense" advice, such statements are basically too general, vague, and abstract to inform principals about how to behave in political conflicts involving their own schools, districts, and selves. Such advice may sound straightforward when it appears in a textbook; but, the complexity of situations vary, and principals must adjust to specific community needs and issues. What works for one person in a particular neighborhood may not produce the same results for another person in that same, or even an adjacent, neighborhood. To be effective, it seems they need to know more about assessing the needs of their specific situation. As Cibulka also points out:

...principals have had little training in determining the strengths and weaknesses of a community, apart from immediate school issues...[if principals are to meet community role expectations] it is necessary to bring new analytical insights to the task. (p. 92)

### The Role of Political Power in Educational Decision-Making

Principals, as a result of this lack of information or training, are often naive when it comes to functioning politically and may fail to realize how critical their political success is to educational decision-making. For example, Stephen K. Bailey (1962) found in a study of eight northeastern states that an inadequate knowledge of politics prevented superintendents and principals from providing effective leadership in securing state funds for schools (p. 52). How these principals and superintendents interacted with citizens was a key element for the success of an educational project (pp. 105-106). Interactions included principals sharing knowledge of school system operations, government, and finance, and then, relating this information to its impact on the local school. Principals were expected to transmit and translate the school system's policies to their communities, and community sentiments to the superintendent; while the

superintendent was expected to work with the school board and the general public. When there was a breakdown in this process, projects were not funded. The unfortunate effects of principals not performing their political roles well directly and negatively impacted the resources allocated to their schools.

This type of interaction is political. Yet many school principals deny the political implications. According to Gladys Kammerer and her associates (1962), the nonpolitical attitudes among principals can be traced to the reform movement that followed muckracking exposes when the term "politics" became a dirty word among educators. "Politics is usually perceived as a game-for-keeps, played by selfish businessmen and dishonest politicians. Teachers are often heard to express the opinion that a school project failed because 'it got mixed up in politics'" (p. 48). Principals don't want to be thought of as being political. However, given the implications, as Bailey (1962) pointed out, of not assuming their political role, they have little choice but to accept how Kammerer (1963), in a later work, defined politics as "the process of making significant community-wide decisions" (p. 5). Viewed in this light, the politics of education, as it has evolved, is the process of making educational

decisions either locally or nationally to get the 'kind of schools we want'. Given the growing scarcity of resources allocated for education, it seems that a principal's failure to understand his/her political role could have great impact for neighborhoods and schools.

Principals not only supervise the daily provision of services but work with communities desiring more and different types of services. When the community petitions the school system (the service allocator), the principal is the mediator between the two. It is this political role of assisting the community with their requests while translating the school system's position which falls to the school principal.

Summerfield (1971) discusses this relationship between parents and professional educators in terms of decision-making about the allocation of resources. The individuals and groups in the neighborhood who seek to influence school policy are the "petitioners" while those charged with distributing the finite resources are the "allocators" (p. 6). The relationship between the petitioners and allocators - "their degree of conflict" - is based on the expectations of the petitioners and the feasibility of a solution to the conflict. If these are in line, then conflict is minimal and satisfaction is

optimal. Specifically, "The ability of a neighborhood to achieve an optimal balance of respect [acceptance] and demand is related to the ability of the political system to match expectations to resources" (p. 96). It is the local principal's role to maintain this balance between the community as the petitioners, and the superintendent as the allocator.

Local school politics such as this, is, according to Davies, a "reality - both formal and informal" (1976, p. 17). Relatively few people in the power structure of a school district exercise decisive power, but the success of educational projects is heavily dependent upon the support of these influential people and the use of their power (Kimbrough, 1964, p. 200).

### The Effective Political Principal

The literature offers many general guidelines or prescriptions to assist principals in functioning effectively politically. The first, and perhaps most crucial, point is that the principal must understand the political system of the neighborhood. Understanding the political system in a neighborhood or community is complex

because of the many interlocking groups both formal and informal; further, each neighborhood has its own political norms. Nunnery and Kimbrough (1971) stress this point heavily:

Attempting political action in ignorance of the political systems' norms is irresponsible leadership....It is most important that school leaders understand how the dynamics of behavior affect the total power structure; how the system may be influenced through political activity; and how to predict accurately the consequences of alternative strategies. (p. 10, 14)

They suggest that studying the power structure of a community is "a serious part of the modern school leader's job" (p. 27), and suggest that the school leader approach this task in an organized, detailed manner beginning with a background study of problems, issues, and past decisions and moving to direct observation and participation in community activities (p. 27-30).

Next, the literature indicates that it is the principal reaching outside the school, staying informed about local issues, having close contacts with community groups as well as school system senior staff that brings resources to the school. While the principal's role differs with the community - as goals must respond to community expectations and problems (Cibulka, 1979, p. 89), this out-reach must occur. In addition, this close

contact provides the principal with a power base that can be used to expand and protect school interests (Summerfield, 1971, p. 22).

This process, according to Summerfield (1971), places the local principal in a crucial role of assisting communities in clarifying expectations and matching those expectations to available resources (p. 96). It is the political function of the principal to minimize the conflict between the school system (the allocator) and the neighborhood (the petitioner) (p. 94). One way of doing this is to function as a consultant, gathering appropriate data and making it available to influential community members.

Another way to do this, according to the literature, is to function as an educational expert. Iannaccone (1970) makes this point strongly by saying that the school leader's "base of influence, his fundamental power resource is his perceived (level of educational) expertise" within the community (p. 40). Kimbrough supports that when he says that "expertness is a resource that the school leader can develop and use to convince other men to use their power for the support of the school" (Kimbrough, 1964, p. 278).

In order to establish this expertise and political leadership, Carpenter (1975) sees the principal in the role of clarifier, facilitator, mediator, as well as teacher of group and political skills (p. 426). So does Cibulka (1979) when he says:

...where parents and other residents do not fully understand how to become involved in the school and how to assume a position of influence, it is the principal's responsibility to develop a leadership training program and to initiate other efforts to close the gap between the school [system] and the community. (p. 88)

Another prescription from the literature is a caution to principals to pay attention to symbolic actions, as "symbol and image are at least as important as actual performance and behavior" (Wiles, 1981, p. 21). Edelman (1964), in The Symbolic Uses of Power, says that "cherished forms of popular participation...are largely symbolic....(and) The official who correctly gauges the response of publics to his acts, speeches, and gestures makes those behaviors significant symbols, evoking meanings for his audience" (p. 188). The school principal must recognize that educational projects are seen as "good" if they represent established neighborhood or school system beliefs and practices. If the project is not accepted, it is because it has not been translated

into the value structure of the neighborhood or school system (Hollingshead, 1975, p. 112). This value structure is influenced by "parental memories of their own schooldays (that) create a barrier which for many is broken down only by long and patient work" (Poster, 1976, p. 102). These meanings then form the basis of principals' leadership with their constituents and allow the principals to function in the political role.

Last, principals must strike and maintain a balance between parents and school system senior staff. Functioning in this political role creates tensions for principals who are trying to be responsive to communities and superiors. Both groups hold the principals accountable but often for different goals. Principals are handed school system goals from above and at the same time are expected to devote energy to specific community concerns. "Principals are frequently caught between these conflicting pressures. Superiors tell them to work with community groups, but impose more and more controls that may conflict with community needs and preferences" (Cibulka, 1979, p. 101). If such a conflict arises and the principals side with either group, they have lost a constituency as well as their effectiveness.

In summary, the literature tells us that broad based active citizen participation while deeply rooted in the American tradition cannot be turned on at will - it must be continuously nurtured (Nunnery & Kimbrough, 1971, p. 167). And since schools are client-serving social organizations with principals hired "to serve community residents, (principals) are obligated to help the community achieve its objectives" (Cibulka, 1979, p. 98), while at the same time representing the wishes of the superintendent.

Education and politics are not antithetical. As Nunnery and Kimbrough (1971) point out, "performing as a politician to develop quality schools is a perfectly legitimate, statesmanlike activity" (p. 1). The principal being on the front line can tap into the power sources in the community, establish credibility, and expert status so that educational decision-making in the community can be shaped.

The literature describes in great detail theories of political organization and the role of power in educational decision-making, but leaves unanswered the question of how this is really happening. In what ways are citizens becoming political around the allocation of educational resources? How are principals working within

their school communities and school systems to see that expectations and needs are met? And, what are the outcomes of these behaviors? These are the questions this study examined.

## CHAPTER 3

### The Method

This research is a case study of two school principals working in a large suburban school system. The purpose of the case study is to ascertain how the political behavior of the principals is associated with the resources allocated to their schools. The purpose of this chapter is to describe this study's research methodology, including the sample, the data collection techniques, the researcher's role as a participant observer, and the procedures used to analyze the data.

### Research Design

The research project was designed to be ethnographic rather than experimental. Experimental paradigms require independent variables to be selectively manipulated and confounding variables to be controlled. Neither

requirement could be satisfied in the context of this project. The process of communities procuring resources for their neighborhood schools obviously was initiated and proceeded without this researcher's intervention or direction. The principals' behavior and the community actions are actual ongoing activities and neither can be controlled. Events play out according to the needs, history, skills, influences, and motivations of the participants. The nature of the research, searching for patterns of meaning embedded in the context of actual public events, further proscribed the use of discriminative experimental methods.

As Spradley (1980), in his book Participant Observation, points out, "Ethnography is the work of describing a culture. Ethnography means learning from people" (p. 3). Its goal is to understand behavior from the actors' point of view. As Denzin (1978) states:

...there is a curious blending of methodological techniques in [ethnography]: people will be interviewed, documents from the past will be analyzed, census data will be collected, informants will be employed, and direct observation of ongoing events will be undertaken....The method entails a continuous movement between emerging conceptualizations of reality and empirical observations. Theory and method combine to allow the simultaneous generation and verification of theory. [This] is one of the few methods currently available that is well-suited to an analysis of complex forms of interactions. (p. 183)

Ethnography normally includes four techniques of data collection: participant observation, document review, open-ended interviews, and introspection. As a participant observer, the researcher becomes immersed in the participants' way of life in order to learn about the insider's point of view. It is the researcher's task to keep detailed notes of all activities and observations which are later used to provide introspection. Document review consists of gathering all pertinent papers and articles, both formal and informal, and subjecting them to systematic analysis. Finally, interviews, designed to triangulate the documents and provide participants' introspection, are conducted.

In this project, I did not wish to control but to see the topic as an unfolding event, just as the participants did. I was in a unique position to conduct this type of study because I had been appointed executive secretary to the task force that the board of education established to investigate the neighborhoods' requests. By using techniques of participant observation, document review, and introspection, I reconstructed the events of the task force from my notes, tapes, and file documents. Open-ended interviews with key participants provided their perceptions of events and behaviors. The data, taken

collectively, were then used to answer the research questions.

### Sample

The study examined two neighborhoods within one community. Each neighborhood was demanding greater school resources. The study focused on the differences and similarities of their needs and actions in relation to the final allocations. The study covers a nine-month span and examines the actions of the two secondary principals, three community leaders, and area superintendent as they worked through a Board of Education appointed task force which had been charged with specifying community needs and offering budgetary recommendations.

The task force was composed of thirty-five members who represented various interests. The school board in executive session selected all task force members from a list of 73 nominees. Nominees were submitted by each school's parent-teacher-association (PTA), all area principals, and the president of the teachers' union. Also, interested citizens were allowed to submit their names for consideration. Because of the rules of

confidentiality of board of education executive sessions, no record of this selection process is available.

This researcher was appointed executive secretary to the task force. In that role I was present at all meetings. In addition, I was asked to function as the formal link between the task force and the school system. In this role, I procured any information that the task force members deemed necessary to the investigation.

The composition of the task force included three members from each of the two neighborhoods that were petitioning for additional resources. One of these neighborhoods, Center, was experiencing rapid growth; the other, North, was experiencing steady decline. (Each neighborhood was named for the high school it surrounded; all names used are pseudonyms.) In addition, three members from each of four adjacent school neighborhoods were placed on the task force because of the potential impact of any shift in resources or school populations. These four neighborhoods had, at the time of the formation of the task force, stable school populations. The people selected to co-chair the task force were chosen by vote at the first task force meeting, and came from the Center and North neighborhoods. Again, these were the neighborhoods that had begun lobbying school board members for

additional support -- one to meet the needs of growth and the other to maintain a full academic and extra-curricular program to keep the school comprehensive in the light of decline. (Note: because North was geographically isolated, it did not fall under the Board's school closure guidelines; though some residents felt that, unless more resources were approved, this might eventually happen.) Also, appointed to the task force were the secondary principals from North and Center, one elementary principal, three teachers, three students, three area office supervisors, three community members at large (a former Board of Education member, a chamber of commerce executive, and the district council of PTA's vice-president), the area associate superintendent, and the executive secretary.

### Data Collection

Because of my position as executive secretary to the task force, I had full access to what people did during the task force meetings, and what file documents such as board of education meeting minutes and local newspaper

accounts said they did during those meetings. To supplement this information I interviewed key participants one year after the task force was completed to find out how these people described and interpreted what occurred at task force meetings.

As a full participant in the task force, I attended and took notes at every meeting and hearing. Meetings were held four times a week from mid-October through mid-November, 1983. The task force's report was written and edited by the chairpersons with my assistance during two all-day weekend sessions. The report was submitted to the board of education during the last week in November. The board of education discussed the report with all task force membership present three times: first, when a progress report was submitted in late October; second, when the final report was submitted; and third, when school system staff presented a reaction position paper in mid-December. Further discussion of individual recommendations was held during budget deliberations.

My note-taking took the form of an anecdotal log of the proceedings coupled with notations of specific participant behaviors such as nonverbal interactions and small group side conversations before, during, and after the sessions. I recorded who spoke to whom and about

what. Since I was always present and viewed as a neutral, I found that I could move from group to group without members stopping private conversations. Participants frequently called me the next morning to discuss the previous night's meeting, to share their perceptions of the activity, and to question the motivation of other participants. It was not unusual to have four or five such phone calls a day. Notes were kept of these conversations. In addition to the formal log, after each of the above listed sessions, I recorded personal reactions and observations in a journal. This account focused on the ways the participants were reacting to each other as well as to the topic of the night. Finally, newspaper accounts of events as well as board of education meeting minutes were collected for later analysis.

To complement the data obtained from file documents and meeting minutes, retrospective interviews were conducted. The interview was designed to accomplish many purposes. One purpose was to collect attitudinal data to determine what makes people take a political interest in their schools. I was interested in knowing not only what values are touched when lack of school resources are perceived, but how principals fit into this scheme. Of

particular concern was how principals learn to behave in such situations - and how they felt about that behavior.

Another purpose of the interview was to correlate people's behavior with their perceptions of that behavior. In other words, how does what a person does compare with what he says he does and feels? And, finally, the interview was intended to collect data that would either support or refute the literature that claims that schools are political organizations and as school leaders, principals can make a difference by the way they play their political roles.

Interviews were conducted with the secondary principals of North and Center, the two task force chairpersons (one from North, the other from Center), and the area associate superintendent. Additional interviews were planned to be conducted with community and staff members who were referred to as "someone I should talk to" by the initial interviewees; however, the initial interviewees did not refer me to other sources. When asked if there was anyone else I should talk to, each interviewee stated that they didn't think any one else could give me additional information or another point of view. As their comments substantiated the file documents and each other,

I did not conduct further interviews. This interview strategy is suggested by Spradley (1980, p. 124).

The interview questions were written after the file documents were analyzed so that interviews would elicit information that would corroborate as well as supplement the file documents. The interview began with all participants being asked to recreate the events which led to the creation of the task force. From that point the interview questions diverged depending upon the participants' role. The following questions were asked of principals, community leaders, and the area superintendent:

#### Principals

- Recreate the community concerns at the time of the task force's creation.
- How did you feel about these issues?
- Were you involved with community members when they formulated these issues? If so, describe your involvement. If not, were you aware of these concerns?
- How did you think the school system would respond to the issues?
- What did you think your role on the task force would be?
- Were you given any direction about that role from superiors?
- What role did you think your community wanted you to play on the task force?
- How did you verify these expectations?
- What do you feel would have been the consequences for not meeting these expectations?
- What did you specifically do to play that role and meet these expectations?
- How do you think your actions were perceived by

community members? By your superiors?

- Is there anything you would do differently if you could do this over?

#### Community Leaders

- Recreate the concerns that led to the formation of the task force.

- Which of these issues did you feel would be resolved? Why?

- What types of actions brought responses from the school system?

- Why do you think that this was so?

- What role did you expect your principal to play?

- Did you ever discuss this with him?

- What specific actions did your principal take with respect to the community's concerns?

- How did the community perceive these actions?

- Are these perceptions the same now?

- Is there anything you would do differently if you could do this over?

#### Area Superintendent

- Recreate the concerns that led to the formation of the task force.

- How did you feel about these issues?

- Which of these concerns did you think the school system would address? Why? Do you feel the same way today?

- What things should principals do when communities voice such serious concerns?

- Did the principals on the task force do any of these things?

- What role did you expect the principals on the task force to play?

- Had you ever discussed this with them? resources?

- What actions did the principals take while serving on the task force?

- How do you think their respective communities perceived these actions?

- What were your perceptions of these actions?

- Is there anything you would do differently if you could do this over?

### Method of Analysis

Using procedures from Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence Method (1980, p. 175) and Garman's (1982) techniques of document analysis, the chronology of task force events was isolated first. Then, patterns of principals' behavior and community actions were identified. In this approach, the analysis begins by isolating and organizing relevant categories of the data, then moves to "componential analysis" of each category, a term by which Spradley means "the systematic search for the attributes" (p. 130) of each category. The goal of this type of analysis is to isolate areas of contrast and similarities within each category so that when categories are compared, repeated patterns or "themes" can be identified.

Specifically, the data from meeting minutes, observations, and interviews were reviewed to reconstruct the events of the task force. Second, the data from journal notes, observations, and newspaper accounts were reviewed to identify political behaviors including the ways parents and principals participated in gathering resources for their schools and the reasons why this participation happened. Third, the data from interviews

were reviewed to identify perceptions and feelings about principals and schools including the skills or characteristics parents identified as necessary for effective leadership and the skills or characteristics principals identified as necessary to gather resources. And fourth, the data from meeting minutes, observations, journal notes, and interviews were reviewed to identify political interactions between principals and parents, and between principals and their superiors.

Initially, the data were sorted and then organized into the following general categories, based on the research questions guiding the study (see Appendix A):

- Kinds of Citizen Actions
- Kinds of Citizen Concerns
- Kinds of Principal Actions Citizens Expect
- Kinds of Principal Actions Superiors Expect
- Ways Principals Act (to Meet Expectations)
- Kinds of Skills Principals Need
- Ways Skills Are Perceived
- Things That Influence Perceptions

Next, each category was analyzed by looking for similarities and contrasts between items within the

category in order to identify consistent attributes or characteristics of the category. A "paradigm", defined by Spradley as "the attributes for all cultural categories in a domain...represented in a chart" (1980, p. 132), was designed for the categories, cross-referencing all items in each category by attributes of the items. In this manner, patterns of contrasts and similarities could easily be seen (see Appendix B). These patterns constituted the answers to the research questions.

Using the procedures described above, the researcher was able to closely follow complex social actions and record and analyze events from the point of view of a participant.

## Chapter 4

### Findings

This chapter reports the data gathered from the case study. First, the school system, then each community with its issues, its leaders, and its principals are described. Next, the data are presented, by research question, in order to specifically focus on how the principals responded to issues and expectations in their respective communities.

### The School System

Lee County is a five hundred square mile county located on the eastern seaboard of the United States. Its 600,000 residents are becoming increasingly diverse. The county's planning board, using 1980 census data, records the 1983 median per capita income as \$19,738, and median household income as \$41,385, making this jurisdiction one

of the wealthiest in the nation. However, because of its location as part of a metropolitan area, the southern portion of the county has become home to large numbers of immigrants from Southeast Asia and Central America, as well as many blacks who have been forced out of the city because of urban renewal projects. The northern section of the county was, until recently, rural. The lifting of a sewer moratorium combined with a strong economy has recently meant unprecedented growth in this area.

The school system, Lee County Public Schools (LCPS), has a reputation for excellence supported by high test scores and a high percentage of graduates matriculating to college. The seven person school board is elected on an at-large basis, with half of the board elected every other year. The term of office is four years. Because of state law, this board of education cannot levy taxes; they can only submit operating and capital budgets to the county council for funding approval. LCPS currently serves 96,000 students, down from 126,000 students in 1972, but up from a low enrollment of 91,000 students in 1980. These students are taught in 150 schools (Statistical Profile, 1984, p. 23). The school system operates under a three area decentralized administrative model. Each area has its own superintendent who is

responsible for a student enrollment of approximately 32,000 students and 45 schools. Each area has come to be identified with the general characteristics of the neighborhoods it encompasses: Area A is highly mobile, highly ethnic and minority; Area B is stable and upper middle class; and Area C, once rural, is now a mixture of the populations of the other areas creating extreme diversity (Statistical Profile, 1984, pp. 33, 97, 157).

This study centered on Area C. The rapid growth, combined with the population diversity, made the area ripe for conflicts over the allocation of limited educational resources. The parents of Area C students were in competition for facilities, transportation, and program resources with the parents of all the other areas, but, primarily with the parents of Area A students because the school board's massive voluntary desegregation plan, which centered in Area A, consumed a disproportionately large share of the district's resources.

The citizens of upper Lee County were becoming increasingly vocal about what they felt was an unequal distribution of educational resources. They expressed resentment and anger that their schools were overcrowded and did not have the same program options as the much publicized Area A desegregation magnet schools. Local Area

C newspapers reported that "the exploding enrollment is not temporary...that long-range solutions are necessary" (Gazette, Nov. 23, 1983, p. 3) and urged citizens to come together to "get organized and petition the County Council" (Almanac, Sept. 25, 1983, p. 2). The school board responded by establishing an Area C task force that was charged with defining the issues, examining the current status of programs and facilities, and making recommendations for change.

While the task force's charge was to examine the entire area, it was apparent from newspaper accounts and citizen comments and actions that the group would focus on two of the six Area C neighborhoods: the Center community which was experiencing the rapid growth; and the North community which was still the most rural and isolated area of the county. Citizens from each of Area C's six neighborhoods were appointed to the task force and chose the Center and North representatives to co-chair the group. The principals appointed to the task force were from Center Junior High School and North Junior-Senior High School.

### The Center Community

Once the far away heart of the county's agricultural industry, Center had become the epitome of suburban development. Light, high technology industries have relocated in the area and the newly built, moderately priced (for the metropolitan area) housing has drawn young professionals as well as middle and lower class families. All came for the highly publicized schools and county services. All discovered that planners had not kept up with economic developments. The country roads were impacted and the schools were operating above their state rated capacities. As the building continued and the population grew, residents were becoming more vocal and were beginning to demand what they felt was promised to them when they moved into the community.

Mr. Smith, the Center representative chosen as task force co-chairperson, embodies these community characteristics and feelings. He is a middle-aged corporate executive who was transferred to the area from a large eastern city. He chose to live in Center because of its peaceful rural nature and the reputation of its

schools. He felt that while he would have to commute to work, he could have the "best of both worlds". His civic-minded corporation encouraged its executives to participate in local governments so he became involved with the local schools via the parent/teacher/association (PTA). As he settled into the area he began to realize that the junior and senior high schools were crowded and that from reading newspaper articles it seemed as if his schools did not have the same program options such as special gifted programs or vocational programs that schools in the southern part of Lee County had. He was convinced that the only way for Center residents to get what they wanted was to exert political pressure on the county council and the school board.

It touched the old nerve that groups maybe in general react mainly to something happening to them...and so we (the task force) triggered that, but the lesson is...a small number of people can throw the school system or the county government structure into a state of alarm and concern. There's no real trick, it really amounts to just showing up for the inevitable hearings and there is every effort made to respond to any citizen input and that's been true (for awhile). It probably is done to almost a fault because the average parent does not respond and to a certain extent those people with extreme views will tend to get much more of a hearing than in a sense they should. If there's anything missing in our system it's that there is not someone either in the public sector or in the school system making a real effort to speak up for the middle ground, either the average student or the average citizen. There is tremendous concern for the special education

student and for the gifted and talented and for the athlete...the PTA should be a spokesman (for the average person) and the principal should see that the information is going home.

Smith soon became a PTA leader and ran for the school board advocating program equity for all Lee County schools. Smith narrowly lost the election but in the process of raising his neighbors' awareness to the issues, he became a spokesman for Area C citizens; becoming a force that would obligate board members to listen. By the time the task force was created, Mr. Smith was firmly established in this role as an informal political power. He had easy access to business leaders, county council and board of education members, the area superintendent and the school principals.

Dr. Martin, the principal of Center Junior High School, the largest junior high school in LCPS, was not initially pleased with being appointed to the task force. Living with the affects of overcrowding he knew the ramifications - "not having extra rooms for classes to expand and having teachers float back and forth" - of the issue in depth; however, he felt that the task force would turn to the principals for leadership and that he was not comfortable in playing that type of role. He said:

I was concerned about the leadership aspect school people would be asked to take...I was afraid that we being the quote "experts" would be asked to be

the chairpersons and the leaders of the different subcommittees. But it didn't work out that way. The parents really took the ball and a couple of people even sought out a leadership role which I was grateful for. I would have felt uncomfortable in a leadership role because this was to be a community response.

Martin concluded that his participation "worked out pretty well" and that the task force "was really worthwhile and long over due, and necessary, obviously".

When the task force formed, Martin had been principal at Center Junior High for four years. When he was first assigned to the school it was located in the middle of a pasture: by the time of the naming of the task force the school was surrounded by townhouse developments; some right up to the school's property line, as close as thirty feet away from the building. The school's population mirrored the changes in the geography: once populated primarily by the children of farmers, the school now also enrolled the children of corporate executives as well as day workers. Dr. Martin was known and respected for his human relations skills. His goal when he came to Center was to establish open communications with parents and community members, specifically to get them involved in and with the school. Both citizens and the area superintendent felt that he had been successful. Smith, representing the community, said that "he [Martin] did

what I expected". This was detailed later in the interview when Smith spoke of Martin as being a resource for information and support. And, the area superintendent stated that Martin was "responsive to his community" because he provided them with information about the school system.

While he saw himself as a strong advocate for the school, Martin also recognized that his role as principal demanded objectivity when it came to helping citizens work with the school system. He supported the task force though he did not agree with citizens who complained of a lack of program equity. He believed that the program at Center Junior High and the other Center schools met the needs of its students, "in so far as they [programs] were not limited by facilities". The school system was not discriminating against the area in this regard according to Martin:

Sometimes, frankly, some of the parents started to throw a lot of things into the boat, and were trying to get (unrelated extras)...as long as we have them on the run, let's try to get this, that, and the other...things like let's get our class size lower...compensatory things that weren't related.

The problem, as Martin saw it, was one of overutilized facilities and overcrowded buildings: "There was a lot of anger over poor facilities, overcrowded facilities, and

the perception on the part of the community that the board had been told this many times in the past and nothing had been done". He felt that by describing in detail the current program and how it was impacted by the overcrowding he could contribute positively to the task force without openly maligning the school system for he felt that the school system had, in fact, "mismanaged or had a lack of direction in terms of preparing for the population increase in this area...for allowing the growth to go unheeded for many years".

#### The North Community

Taking pride in its close-knit, rural life, long time residents of North reveled in their geographic isolation. They took comfort in knowing everyone and everything that was happening. While only twenty miles north of Center, the town of North could have been in another country. Much community life centered around the Junior-Senior High School, which with 690 students in six grades was the smallest secondary school in LCPS. It was a community school in the fullest sense of that term: the town and school library were one and the same; the school's

cafeteria served as a local church's social hall; and the principal's secretary was the town's treasurer; the teachers farmed the land. The town supervisors worked hard to maintain this environment - development had been banned by their refusal to allow the construction of additional water wells or sewers. Periodically, citizens complained that "the school had less" and wasn't getting what it needed, that the school system was "neglecting North". Their complaints were general and, as the area superintendent said "an historical given". According to the PTA leader:

...[for] a the majority of the people, I think, one of the things they suffered from was a lack of understanding and knowledge of what was really going on. They were of the opinion that we just weren't able to have - that they [the school system] just deliberately don't give us...the things [programs] that other schools have. We have less.

A few years prior to the formation of the task force, a small number of young professionals opted to move to North (instead of the closer Center) when they were transferred to the area. Even though housing was limited in North, these people felt that they could get more for their money and provide a country lifestyle for their children. They also felt that Center was beginning to experience more urban problems such as higher crime rates

and drug usage. These new residents immediately were able to make the school complaints specific. "The problem was filling it [the building] up." Enrollment was declining. When that happened, the school system removed staff which made it impossible to offer the total comprehensive secondary program upon which LCPS's reputation was based. In reference to the situation, principal Barton, stated:

...when they [the community] looked at the curriculum offerings at other schools, they felt that the offerings were broader - and they were - than they were at North. We reassured them that what they were getting was good solid basic kinds of things that one would expect from a comprehensive high school. [But] they wanted their kids to take a variety of things that by virtue of the numbers we just could not offer.

North students did not have the same range of elective courses as other LCPS students had nor could they be guaranteed that upper level courses such as French V or Trigonometry would be available when they needed them. While the old timers were happy to see that their problem was real, they were not pleased that the new residents proposed increasing the school's enrollment in order to improve its program. To them, that meant change and "impact on their property values" and they didn't want that for their community. Adjacent communities were relieved with the internal dissension in the North community because they did not want their children to be

bused to North because of distance (long bus rides) and the program reputation at North. The battle lines were drawn. Gradually the new residents became involved in town politics by seeking and winning PTA and town government positions. Once in these positions they began to press the school board for additional resources.

Mrs. Green was typical of the new North residents. The simplicity of country life appealed to her. She decided to get involved with the school after hearing her daughter complain about the limited course offerings and the discipline problems at the school. In addition, the daughter "had no homework and was not being challenged". Mrs. Green began as a parent volunteer working in the main office. A former math teacher, she soon found herself substitute teaching because the regular substitutes refused to come to North because of its location and reputation. The more she worked in the school, the more concerned she became; not only was the program limited but so were basic resources such as paper and books.

I saw the things that my daughter was saying were absolutely true; there was chaos in that building. In the classrooms you had so many different ability levels within one classroom. There were, might have been 27 kids in a math class that I was subbing in, ranging from just able to read to pre-algebra. I was told the problem was in the scheduling with so small a school. The teachers had junior high classes and senior high classes, there was no separation...and that's what led me to

say we weren't getting what everyone else has. I really wanted to find out if this were true.

Mrs. Green, at this point in her involvement, made the intellectual leap that equated mixed grouping for some classes with poor school management and inadequate resources. Much later, she learned that these problems were not related, that North had been allocated adequate resources, and her "problem" was created when mixed grouping became a solution to the problem of declining enrollment, and a desire to keep as many offerings as possible. However, at the time, she received no information from the principal that the problem was any different than her initial analysis.

Mrs. Green had no leadership experience, but accepted the presidency of the PTA convinced that "someone had to do something about the deplorable conditions" at the school. She organized PTA testimony, that decried the lack of resources, and participated at the next board of education budget hearing, and was pleasantly surprised when the resources she had requested (books and paper) were sent to the school. The receipt of these resources, while unrelated to the real problem at North, reinforced Mrs. Green's early perceptions that the school was not "getting what everyone else has":

I was surprised to see that we actually got them. Whether it was our testimony or whether it would have happened anyway, I don't know, but it was interesting to see that we asked for those things and we got them. We didn't - but should have had - the information whether this was in the budget or not. I would have liked to have known a little more a lot of times. There are things that happen at the board or even at the area office that affect our schools and I didn't think I knew it, and that was one of the things I kept saying - we had to go out and find the information for ourselves, it didn't come out there [to North]...we should have had it. It's the principal's job to do that [provide the community with information about how the school system allocates resources].

Given what happened later, had Mrs. Green had the information which she retrospectively discussed above, she might have assisted the North community in framing their concerns in a manner which would have been more palatable to the board of education. The problems faced by a small school trying to provide a comprehensive educational program would have been such a concern.

In an effort to reach out to the school system and gain more information, Mrs. Green established contact with the area superintendent and was delighted to be appointed to the task force, seeing it as a vehicle to help North. Though she was taken aback at being selected as co-chairperson of the task force (she described herself as "not knowing the politics and how to be effectively heard" at the time), she was determined to use that position "to

gather as much information as possible to find out what was really happening" in order to make changes for North.

Mr. Barton, North's principal, acknowledged that he was an outsider and uncomfortable with the community.

I do think that one should be in a community that is pretty much in line with his own personality, his own style, and all that kind of stuff. I don't think one should go to an extreme community unless your personality is like that...as a prospective administrator one should think about that...but one should be flexible enough to deal with community members irrespective to where you are....There aren't as many communities that are as different as I am and North. They didn't want me out there.

When he was appointed principal five years before the task force was established, he knew that the community was displeased with his appointment, "they said I was the discussion of the whole community in the one local store - 'oh, god, what have we got!'" He thought it amusing that some "fifteen North couples" gathered references from parents at his previous assignment and that they were hard-pressed to come up with any "dirt". They went to another school to hear him speak and as he recounted the story, he "spoke for four minutes and the kids applauded for ten and they [the parents] said 'if he can get the kids that excited he must be pretty good then!'" But, because of the many differences between Barton and the North community, he still felt that "every once in a while their value system took me back" (apparently, though he

was never specific, he was referring to the community's rural perspective which he felt was antiquated) and he saw his function as trying to "expand the values of these people on an individual basis". He admitted that being so different from a community placed much stress on a principal but felt that he had successfully established a positive working relationship with the North community and "was sure I had gotten somewhere. I had succeeded more times than I had not". Mrs. Green differed, stating that the way Mr. Barton worked "with us was to say yes to everything - and never follow-up - a real glad hander".

Barton believed he did focus on the needs of the school which he felt were minimal and to be expected in such a small school in a large school system. He explained by saying:

I was empathetic to the extent of knowing that they, just like me, wanted the best for their kids. By the same token, I knew what the system could offer. The system just couldn't put in five different kinds of foreign languages with two kids per class...there's a reality factor.

His strategy for mediating between the school system and the parents was to filter the information he transmitted to the parents, in order to reduce conflict and not make anyone angry. He felt that the community wanted him to "feed them information - and stand in the shadow - so they could fight the battle" with the school system. In

return, they "offered me security, but I never joined them in any kind of clandestine operation [by giving what he seemed to consider privileged information about school system operating practices]...I didn't want that kind of noose around my neck, I wanted to make decisions for myself". Instead, he had tried to get the community involved in long-range planning, but they wanted to focus on immediate needs.

They haven't necessarily taken logic, [what] I consider logic, in the process of resolving any problem they've had. Instead they get rather emotional about it and in the process of getting emotional you do things that aren't necessarily the best thing to do. They haven't done any long-range planning...I've tried hard to get them involved in that. And some of them said `hey, my kid'll be graduating next year, we've got to get these changes made'...They wanted me to join them in that...I couldn't; it's just not me.

Because of his fear of generating conflict between parents and school system senior staff, Barton saw the task force as a way for the community to receive the information they wanted directly from school system staff, and, in turn, have the school system staff defend the system's position. Barton then hoped, that with the weight of the task force behind them, community leaders could redirect their energy into long-range planning.

To summarize, both the Center and North communities were experiencing change as a result of population growth

and shifts. Their problems, on the surface, appeared similar: both communities felt that they were not receiving the educational resources necessary to operate the quality education program they expected. However, the Center community came to focus on concrete needs such as additional classrooms and buildings to alleviate particular overcrowded situations that detracted from program quality while the North community came to focus on the abstract equity concern that North did not receive resources granted other schools and thus could not offer a quality program. The two communities and their principals approached their problems and used the task force in quite different ways. These differences are illustrated in comparing answers to the research questions, for each community.

#### Differences in Definition of the School's Problem

The first research question asked: In what ways do citizens of two neighborhoods in a large suburban school district become political around the allocation of educational resources ? Two categories of concerns -- one

for each community -- emerged from the file documents, newspaper accounts, and interviews. The categories and the concerns were consistent across the data; each concern appeared in each data source.

Bricks and mortar issues became the primary concern of the Center citizens. These issues revolved around the specific facts of overcrowded classrooms and school buildings, and the limits that overcrowding placed on program implementation because they directly touched each family in the neighborhood. Smith, the Center community leader, said:

The fact that we were short of class space meant that certain programs weren't being offered and I believe that it was the desire of the board to be seen as responsive to that need.

Center citizens felt that the school board was obligated to realign its resources, or obtain additional resources from the county council to accommodate them because all of the schools in the neighborhood were as markedly overcrowded as the high school which had a capacity for 1570 students while the current enrollment was 1690 students and the two-year projection was for 2258 students. In other words, more buildings would ease the overcrowding and would provide space for programs such as computer laboratories, resource centers, day care programs, special education programs, and elementary art

and foreign language programs that were not currently available. Transportation, lacking enough buses, so that students had to ride buses for two hours a day, emerged as another Center community concern. More buses would eliminate unsafe, crowded buses and would shorten the length of the bus routes which, in turn, would shorten the amount of time the students spent on the buses. The citizens viewed the overcrowded situation as untenable and vowed to do whatever was necessary to change the status quo. On the other hand, they felt that their requests were reasonable, and supported by the school system's own planning documents which had a history of being a conservative estimate of enrollment, and if they were organized and spoke in a loud voice, the school board would have no option but to build more schools and buy more buses.

The community felt that their organized lobbying and letter writing efforts which focused on the crowded buses and classrooms, and how this overcrowding of school facilities negatively affected their children's educational program, forced the school board to create the task force which in turn focused attention on the overcrowded conditions at Center schools. In assessing the situation, Smith observed:

...the furor [that the task force] caused focused enough attention both at the school level and the county council level to create the environment where money would be spent on facilities that were not in the (original capital budget) plan. There is no doubt that the capital plan that we had in our hands at the time had no additional facilities at the secondary level. So I've got to assume that the task force was an event forcing [the issue]....We stimulated...I would guess without the task force not doing what it did, we probably wouldn't have had the [additional money for facilities].

Mr. Smith, as he stated in the interview, saw his community's concerns clearly as "bricks and mortar" issues tied directly to the allocation of funds, but at times felt compelled to speak of the issues in terms of the emotional, value packed issue of program quality in order to rally his neighbors to put pressure on the school board to build more buildings to accommodate the student population. He inferred that parents were more responsive and more likely to take action if they believed their children's education was at risk. When Smith spoke of program equity he always concretely tied it to the way inadequate facilities can limit program:

The biggest gap was in those areas where facilities limited the programs...no space for vocational programs...no space for special gifted programs... no space for any type of expansion such as foreign languages in the elementary schools...or day care ...and there we were only going to get a solution in the long-term if the board accelerated facilities (development). To a certain extent, I guess, we succeeded. It came out as we proposed.

At the elementary school level, one (way to solve the overcrowding) was to accelerate the building of two new schools and both were accepted. So there was a direct effect. (At the secondary level) the addition here (at Center high school) probably wouldn't have happened without the task force recommendation. The task force called attention to the fact there was a (rapidly increasing enrollment) crunch coming.

The citizens of North focused on bricks and mortar issues as a side note. North Junior-Senior High was faced with declining enrollment and undersized classes. The citizens knew that the school board could not close the school because of its geographic location. It was just too far away to bus the students to Center; besides poor country roads and traffic congestion, Center schools just did not have the space to accommodate additional students. Transportation was an issue for them only in the sense that the current number of buses limited their school's field trip options. The subject of primary importance for this community was the program equity issue. They wanted to preserve the "uniqueness of the smaller school" without having to fight this "battle" every year. They felt that because they had made planning decisions which limited population growth (actually promoted decline) they were being "penalized with educational disequity". The cry from their leader, Mrs. Green, was "we don't get our fair

share" of staff or programs; all we have is "poor discipline and low test scores".

The North community felt cheated, because, with an enrollment of 690 students across six grades, they could not have complete agriculture, music, art, and computer programs in addition to separate class sections for French IV and Spanish IV, while offering trigonometry, calculus, and advanced placement English every year. From their comments during task force meetings and in the local newspaper, it was apparent that these citizens had no knowledge of school system staffing procedures or scheduling constraints that were exacerbated by low enrollment. They compared their school to schools averaging enrollment of 1600 students across three grades. Data presented to the task force indicated that LCPS spent 30% more per pupil to operate North than any other secondary school in the system. Mr. Barton, their principal, noted:

...the community feelings in North were historical. The concern (over the years) for the most part by the community is that they have received the short stick of the resource mantle; and, consequently, they will do whatever they feel is necessary or they will follow a pattern common to what they've done in the past to get the recognition of the resources they need. It is a very small school. (They don't understand that) it is a very expensive school (to run). A large percentage of the people there now are there because they want their kids reared in that kind of environment...because to

them it's free of sin and vice. It's purely an emotional argument.

Once the bricks and mortar concerns of Center and the value concerns of North reached the point of general public awareness, the citizens took a variety of actions that involved them politically with the school board and the county council. These actions called for differing levels of citizen effort and involvement. As a means of roughly comparing these actions, this researcher grouped actions by the amount of time and energy the action required of the citizen. Low level actions included urging each other to "band together" and participate by submitting questions, comments, and recommendations; as well as to discuss the problem, make phone calls to neighbors and board members, and invite the superintendent to a PTA meeting to talk.

Mid-level actions ranged from gathering data, sending telegrams, writing letters, serving on committees, and attending hearings in large numbers to actually lobbying the state delegates, the county councilmen, the school board, and the superintendent. The purpose of these actions was to state, in a loud manner, wishes of the community, to ensure that the political decision makers heard. Citizen leaders stressed the use of "scare

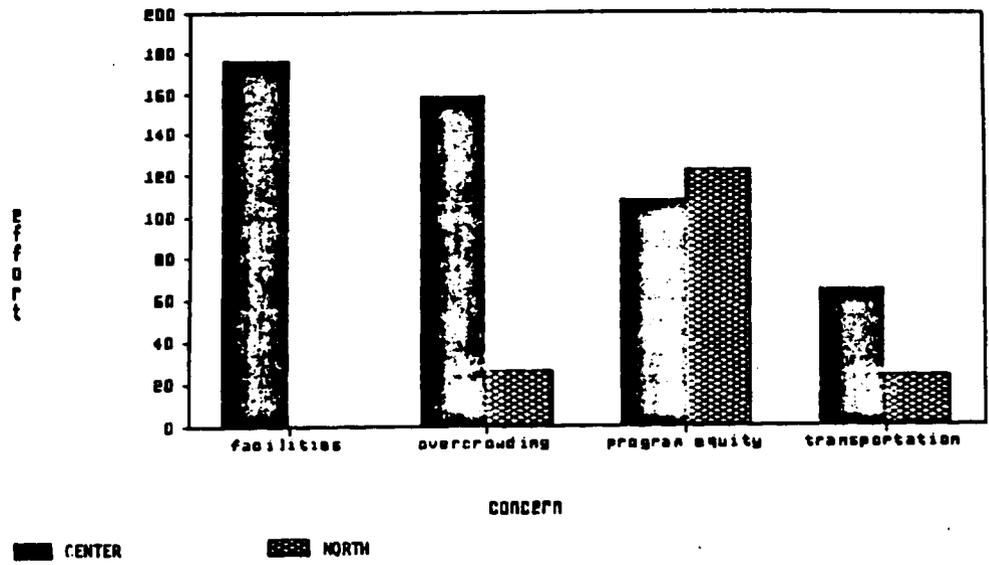
tactics" and the need for "vocal participation" feeling certain that, as Mr. Smith put it, "the squeaky wheel gets attention".

High levels of effort and involvement were demanded of the citizens who served as PTA president, served on the task force, testified at the various public hearings, wrote formal proposals, and ran for public office. Performing these actions were the community leaders. They were out front rallying their constituents to participate by taking mid- or low-effort actions. The only non-community leader to take such a high level of action was Mr. Barton, the North principal, who initiated and authored the proposal which would increase North's enrollment. His actions are discussed in detail later in the paper.

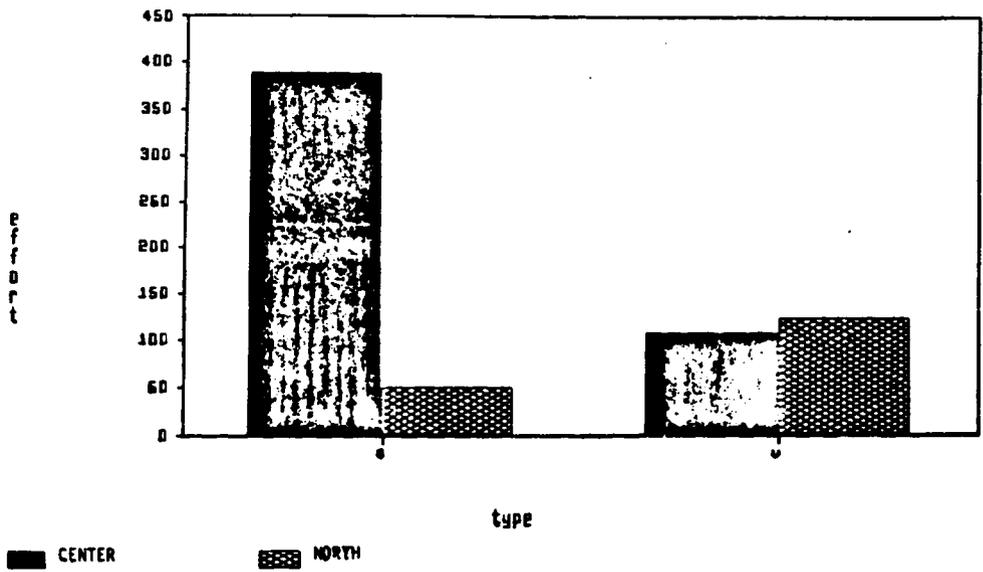
For the purpose of getting some measure of the citizens' actions, each time a different action appeared in the data, it was assigned a numerical value indicating the required level of effort: two (2) for low, four (4) to six (6) for mid, and ten (10) for high (see Appendix B). By totaling each community's action figures, the researcher was able to graph the amount of effort each community expended in each area of concern.

Graph #1 supports the contention that the Center community was primarily concerned with bricks and mortar issues while the North community focused on value issues. Graph #2 illustrates the relative amount of effort expended by each community on each concern.

GRAPH #1: TYPE OF CONCERN vs. EXPENDED EFFORT



GRAPH #2: SPECIFIC CONCERNS vs. EXPENDED EFFORT



The task force in its final report to the board of education made 47 recommendations. Of these, 24 referred to value issues and required, prior to implementation, feasibility studies and major board policy decisions and were tabled for future discussion. The remaining 23 recommendations pertained to the easing of overcrowded schools, buses, and facilities. The costs of implementing these bricks and mortar recommendations were accepted and included in the board's upcoming operating and capital budgets; funds were authorized for the immediate construction of a 400-student addition to Center, and for the planning phases of two new secondary schools in the Center community. As North's request for a magnet program required policy decisions, no action was taken; however, three additional staff positions were budgeted for North so that the current level of programming could be maintained, in spite of enrollment decline.

#### Expectations of the Principal: Consensus and Differences

The second research question asked: In this situation, what roles are secondary principals in these communities expected to assume by their community members

and by their superiors? Analysis revealed that the citizens of both communities expected their principals to behave in two ways. The principal was expected to play the role of the school consultant. The school consultant attends meetings, provides information, clarifies issues, responds to requests, stays objective, provides knowledge about the school system, serves as a resource, is a problem solver, and assumes responsibility for communicating with and educating the community. As Smith commented:

The principal has to stay as close to objective as possible and provide information as simple as enrollment - the number of large classes - or perhaps information that he or she is privy to about what the children are doing at the next or the previous school. The principal is one of the few people who has access to information that would be helpful as to what staff are seeing as defects ...[in] program quality. I especially expected them to shoot down any erroneous contentions...I hoped they would correct gross errors in information. I thought that they would be reactive to those.

The community leaders saw the consultant role as an extension of the educational expert. As a school consultant, these leaders expected their principals to have an open door to the community, support community needs, lobby parents and the general community to support the school, and accurately describe conditions at the

school so the community leaders could in turn use this information to gain wider support for the school.

Mr. Smith, Mrs. Green, and the area superintendent all cited the above expectations for their principals. They were consistent both in content and in tone. Mr. Smith felt that principals provided a "fail-safe mechanism" that kept citizens from focusing on wrong or unattainable goals. He reasoned that if the principal functioned as a consultant and used his knowledge to communicate with and educate the community then he could "stay as close to objective as possible" without needing "to be dominant". It was Mr. Smith's assumption that the

principal should know more and must be able to demonstrate that he or she knows exactly how the [school] system works...that you've seen this kind of problem before and that you're the person who can work it through. The last thing you want is for the principal to confess to a feeling of his or her own helplessness because there is a bureaucracy.

The difference between the communities was illustrated by Mrs. Green's greater need for education about the workings of the school system. She and the entire North community were politically naive, whereas Mr. Smith and the Center community were not. Mrs. Green expected frequent and honest communication from her

principal. For her, a principal had "an obligation to take issues to community leaders" and educate them about system concerns, and about "how to make themselves heard and effective". In return, she felt that a principal could then "use the parents" for the betterment of the school. She elaborated by saying:

Keeping them [parents] informed is the first step. Then, at least in my case, I didn't know a lot about the politics and about the method of how to make myself heard, I didn't know where I could be used and I think a principal can inform parents on how they can be effective. I think they can do that...I went into ask him...but never had that communication with him [Barton]. Looking back, I don't ever think he was honest about the problems.

The area superintendent's expectations were clear. It is the principal's responsibility to "educate the community as to what is going on with the system". Further, "the principal has to be an educational advocate for the community in terms of providing information, clarifying concerns, and helping the community negotiate the system". (Note that this is a very mild form of advocacy, and the role as described above is more like that of a consultant.) But the superintendent cautioned principals "not to get involved in controversial, flag-waving issues" because they would place the principal in a no-win situation between the school system and the

community. Her message was direct, she expected the principal, as the school advocate, as the educational leader, to "frame the issues and present them to the community...while teaching leadership skills to community members so that they could support the schools". She felt that "many principals do not realize that they are power brokers in this regard" and as a consequence miss opportunities that would further support their schools.

When Dr. Martin, the principal of Center's school, was interviewed, he stated that he had an understanding of his role that matched that of Smith and the superintendent. According to Martin, "the expertise aspect of it is critical because parents typically do not know who to call or where to go for information within the school system and we have a good working knowledge of where to go to get data." His role was primarily, to be an "educational expert", and to provide accurate information as a consultant, supporting the community's efforts, while remaining as neutral as possible. To perform this role required "constant dialogue" and solicitation of feedback from both community leaders and the area superintendent. While acknowledging the "tightrope" nature of the role, he expressed no discomfort with it. Martin provided the following view of his

responsibilities:

...providing accurate information [to parents] is a critical part of my job...whether I'm describing the program at the school or telling people who to call to get information about the system.

By contrast, Mr. Barton expressed concern during his interview that he "could never join them [the community] because telling them [the community] everything would be damning the system" and that "wasn't him...[he's too] ethical, and moral and church-going". He did not elaborate on this point, but only inferred that he was not comfortable in sharing his knowledge of school system operating practices because that would make him disloyal to the system. Veiled in this statement were hints that school system practices might not all be above board. He did feel that he was expected to be the expert "to get more for kids". He could not recall any expectations the superintendent would have for him.

### Differences in Principals' Performance

The third research question asked: In what ways do the secondary principals of this school district play these roles? The file documents, specifically the notes of the task force meetings, showed the two principals

behaving in very different ways. Dr. Martin gathered data, provided information about programs, policies, and school system practices, and clarified questions and issues. During the interview, Martin recalled:

I find [sic] myself making suggestions about people to talk to and some of the kinds of educational agencies to possibly tap. I basically served as a resource, running interference for the parents in terms of getting factual and statistical information [from the school system], and probably just as a listening post - trying not to take a real stand although they knew that I sympathized certainly with the issues that I had to deal with - the overcrowding, and the lack of facilities.

In opposition to Martin's neutral stance, Barton actively participated in the discussions, raised issues, and initiated the solution to his school's declining enrollment problem. Barton also saw his role on the task force as that of a "researcher...looking for anything that could be added to the curriculum to attract kids out there". Mr. Barton, acting on his own, wrote a proposal that would make North the site of a high technology magnet program. Such programs had been successfully implemented in Area A to foster voluntary desegregation in schools which had predominately minority student enrollment. Barton argued that such a magnet program would, because of its uniqueness, increase student enrollment at North. After writing the plan, Mr. Barton lobbied task force

members, and the proposal was included in the group's final report.

Reflecting upon his efforts during the interview, Barton regretted writing the proposal as he realized it focused on the wrong issue:

I realized that whole idea of building a magnet at North was pretty much impossible and eventually the whole school will die.

He partially explained his statement by noting that the school board had earlier made a policy decision that would promote magnet programs only for the purposes of desegregation. He did not give any reasons for his feelings about the school's future; however, he felt compelled not to share his realization of his error with community members:

In fact, you [this researcher] and my wife are the only ones I've shared it with; I don't like to launch out on any kind of plank and find out that I was going a long, long way. I soon realized after the task force presented the report that we weren't going to get it. Magnets were for other things...but I never felt that the work was in vain because I got to do some research that I wouldn't have done...and it didn't affect my standing in the community because that comes from what you do day-to-day.

Initially, North community members were pleased with Mr. Barton's efforts to write the proposal for a high technology magnet. In Green's view, the proposal was a viable idea:

People thought it was a good idea, thought it would solve the problems of North. [But when the board of education failed to fund the proposal, Mrs. Green realized that] we were fighting for something that we shouldn't have had anyhow, not that we shouldn't have had, but wasn't realistic, it was misguided.

The more time Green spent with school system staff working on the task force, the more she learned about how the system allocated resources. This information led her to conclude that North was not being cheated by the school system, that North was actually allocated a greater percentage of resources than larger schools, and that the issues facing the school were not related to minimal resources, rather the issues were tied to how the available resources were utilized within the school.

Maybe he [Barton] didn't understand. I don't think it's been a case of lack of enrollment or resources, rather it's how you utilize the teachers [and resources] you've got.

Interestingly, despite the differences between the two principals, the area superintendent believed that both men acted appropriately as the "principals never became a focus of the task force". She felt that each man met his community's expectations and "any other behavior on their part would have been unwise".

### Differences in Principals' Effectiveness

The fourth research question asked: In playing such roles, how are these secondary principals behaviors judged to be "effective" or "ineffective"? The interviewees singled out many skills necessary to playing the roles of consultant effectively. Skills most often mentioned were oral communication skills. The principal needs to be a "good listener and interpreter", a clarifier of questions, concerns, and issues. Interviewees next cited the human relations skills of flexibility, sensitivity, honesty, and diplomacy. The strength of the relationships between community and principal were said to depend on these bonds. Community leaders expressed a need to trust their principals and the information being shared.

Martin was emphatic that his credibility rested on his ability to "not compromise my neutrality - even though that would be self-serving". He saw his strength in being a "listening post" and felt very comfortable in gathering and sharing information. He described himself as always seeking feedback in order to maintain open lines of communication. Martin's stated philosophy was consistent

with his community's expectations and descriptions of his actions, as presented by Smith.

Barton verbally stressed, as Martin had inferred, the need for truthfulness and flexibility on the part of a principal in working with communities. However, he contradicted this in other statements by implying a reluctance on his part to provide school system information to parents. This contradiction is furthered by Green's descriptions of his actions. While Barton saw himself as educating his community in an honest, sensitive manner up to a point, his community did not concur; in fact, according to Green, they never knew what was going on in the school system and felt that they could not trust Barton because he just told them "what we wanted to hear".

The next group of skills discussed by the interviewees were in the areas of management and leadership. Effective management and leadership skills were considered important in terms of a principal's need to organize and manage information so that problems could be solved. Martin took much care in encouraging his community to limit their efforts to the issues surrounding the overcrowded school conditions. He discussed, in the interview, how issues can get side-tracked and then get no system response, and how it was critical to the

community's success that they remain focused. He was able to provide them with enough concrete examples of the impact of overcrowding so that they were able to stay with the one issue.

The respondents measured the effectiveness of principals by their use of the identified skills. Because of the accuracy of the information he provided and the clarifying questions he asked, Martin was perceived by Smith as being highly effective in that he was a good resource and a strong advisor. Smith made the following observations about the task force:

[It] got more from Martin as he gave us personal experience...he seemed to open up more than Barton. I don't think at any point Martin was turning against the school system but I thought he was speaking beyond his own immediate assignment at Center Junior; where as Barton stuck right to North and didn't go too much beyond it.

According to Smith, Martin played the expected role by sharing personal experiences such as how he had to deal with the daily problems of running an overcrowded school, and providing information about the school system such as programs offered at other LCPS schools, which would help parents achieve their goals. Smith concluded his comments on Martin's effectiveness by stating that it was "unrealistic expectations" on the part of citizens and a

principal's failure to correct them that led to community perceptions of a principal's ineffectiveness.

When this topic was discussed during the interview, Mrs. Green, on the other hand, expressed anger towards Barton, and commented:

He never told us what the problems were...he was wrong for not perceiving the situation as it was...that his proposal was unrealistic and pushed the community into fighting for a program that the school board couldn't support without major policy changes.

Green contended that had Barton been more knowledgeable about policies and practices, the North community would have been better served.

As reported earlier, the area superintendent perceived both principals' actions as appropriate to their situations because they did not become the focus of the group. She added that it was her responsibility as their supervisor "to intervene if [the] principals behaved contrary to expectations". No such interventions occurred. It should be noted that since the end of the task force, both principals have changed positions. Barton was transferred to a special assistant position in the system's central office, and Martin was promoted to the principalship of Center High School. When asked about the relationship of these personnel moves to the principals' behavior on the task force, the area

superintendent replied that "they were not at all related; both principals had done what they needed to do on the task force."

## Chapter 5

### Conclusions

Chapter 5 begins with a summary of the study and the findings. It then presents conclusions drawn from the data and discusses the implications of those conclusions. The final section includes suggestions for future study and general comments.

### Summary

The overall purpose of this study was to determine whether notable differences in political behaviors could be identified between a principal in a school which was allocated more resources and a principal in a school receiving less. The possibility of differences in the political behaviors of principals was of special interest because a review of the literature disclosed that while the principal's role is viewed as more political than

ever, little is known about how principals actually play this role.

The literature tells principals that they cannot afford to be apolitical or unclear about the political realities of their jobs because this role is critical in educational decision making. Furthermore, failure of principals to be astute politicians can have unfortunate implications for their schools and neighborhoods. In the literature, these general statements are followed by guidelines which only vaguely define appropriate political activities. These statements urge principals to understand and have on-going contact in the local political system, to maintain a position of balance between parents and senior staff, to clarify expectations so conflicts between parents and senior staff are minimal, to teach parents how to deal effectively with the school system bureaucracy, to gather and make appropriate data available to community members, to become educational experts, and, last, to assist community members in attaching appropriate symbolism to events. These general directives were supported by the data from this study.

The literature also urges principals to understand and have on-going contact in the local political system. In this study, both principals, when interviewed, felt

they had a complete understanding of their neighborhoods and the issues of concern (pp. 58,67). Retrospectively, only the Center community leader concurred with this perception (pp. 58-9). Both communities faced a similar problem, but because of different levels of political knowledge and different types of principal intervention, framed their concerns differently. Without a principal who has a good understanding of and contact with the local community, a community may be more likely, as the North community was, to focus on an issue or issues to which the board of education is not likely to respond (pp. 91-2).

Next, the literature suggests that the principal's role is to maintain a balance between parents and school system senior staff by clarifying community expectations so that conflict between the parents and the senior staff is minimized. One principal in this study was able to do this. He helped his parents deal with the school system bureaucracy by gathering information, clarifying questions, and identifying resources within the school system which could provide assistance (p. 86). He felt it was important, as well as a critical part of his job, to do this (p. 84). Since he agreed that the community had attached the appropriate meaning to the events of the situation, he stated that his role was then to keep them

focused on the prime issue (p. 59). Because of these actions, he was seen as an effective, educational expert and as an advocate for his school (pp. 58-9).

The other principal in this study acted in a very different way. He did not believe that it was his role to share information or explain the school system bureaucracy. In fact, he felt very strongly that to do so would be compromising and inappropriate (p. 85). Ironically, this is exactly what his community leader seemed to want and need. She described herself as inexperienced and was angry that he did not provide guidance (pp. 65, 83). This lack of information and knowledge led to greater conflict between the community and the school system (pp. 88, 91). It also led the community to view the principal as ineffective.

The literature suggests that principals maintain this balance and minimize conflict by teaching parents how to work with school system senior staff. This is done by gathering and making appropriate data available, by becoming an "expert", and by assisting the community in attaching appropriate symbolism or meaning to events. The principal in the study who did all of these activities (pp. 82, 84, 59) was seen by his community as effective. The other man, was seen by his community as ineffective.

Though he actively participated in the task force, he did none of the suggested activities (pp. 83, 85, 87).

This study, while examining only two neighborhoods in one school district, suggests the variety and complexity of the principal's political role. These cases illustrate that the behavior of principals cannot be studied in isolation; but must include the history of the community and the situation. The details of this particular study reveal the ways in which two men followed the general guidelines set forth in the literature. Although the results of this study are generally supportive of the literature, they further indicate that following such general guidelines without attention to the specifics of the local situation may be misleading. The importance of the local situation was clearly revealed in the two cases described here.

Although the citizens in both neighborhoods became aroused when they felt that their schools were not receiving the educational resources necessary to maintain a high quality program, from there on, their concerns diverged. One community focused on facilities: the issue to them was that their schools were overcrowded and overutilized in a way that diminished program quality. Their request was basic: expand or build more schools.

These citizens gathered quantitative data to illustrate specific overcrowding situations, and began, with letter writing and telephone campaigns, to place pressure on elected officials (p. 71).

The leader of this community was a corporate executive, knowledgeable about school system politics, who had a clear understanding of the issue and what actions needed to occur. Their principal agreed with the community's concern and provided them with information that would support their claims, in addition to keeping them focused on the single issue of overcrowding. They all came to rely heavily on the obvious and verifiable need for the school board to provide classroom seats for the rapidly increasing student population (pp. 71-2). The board did accept their arguments and supporting data, and did start a capital improvement program that would ease the overcrowded conditions (p. 80).

The other community, faced with declining enrollment at the system's smallest secondary school, complained that their school was neglected and its program wasn't the same as that of other schools. Their appeal to the school board was emotional, "we're not getting our fair share", without attention to documenting this contention with data that the school board had to do something about. The

community hoped that a magnet proposal, written by their principal, would provide the "missing" elements to their program (pp. 73-4).

Their leader was a housewife committed to improving the school, but was politically inexperienced and in need of systems information and basic help in understanding the dynamics of the issue. Their principal did not feel that the school system would actually do anything about the situation and did not feel comfortable sharing this or other information about the school system with the community (p. 67). For some reason, he felt that his proposal might work (p. 86); however, because of board policy decisions designating magnet programs solely for the purpose of voluntary desegregation, this proposal was dismissed by the board as being unacceptable, as the board was unwilling to make a policy change (p. 80).

Both communities expected their principals to work with them as neutral, fact-giving consultants who were able to correct informational errors, as well as provide insights into the school system. The politically knowledgeable leader was more articulate in delineating his expectations than was the housewife. His needs were clear. He wanted his principal to be a conduit for information and a "fail-safe mechanism" that would prevent

gross errors. He wanted his principal to be available to the community, but he did not expect the principal to "carry the ball" (pp. 81-2). The housewife's needs were greater and less specific. She wanted to be taught, somehow, the political realities of the system. She seemed to desire information and a type of principal involvement she was not getting (pp. 82-3).

These findings indicate that the principal's role in working with communities depends, to some degree, on the political sophistication of the community. The more sophisticated the community, the more the principal may be able to maintain neutrality by playing the information giving, sounding-board consultant. Communities less sophisticated may demand more principal involvement in first framing the issues, and then in gathering support data.

Even though the community leaders had different needs, they and the area superintendent had similar expectations of the principals. They expected the principals to be a resource, a consultant, an advisor for the community (pp. 82-4). The principal was the person to whom the community should turn for assistance in gathering data and negotiating the internal workings of the school system. The principals' role was that of support, "of a

player within the arena" (Wiles, 1981, p. 13); the principal was not expected to be out front leading the group.

While the expected behavior was similar, the two principals played these roles in very different ways. One strove for neutrality, gathering and giving information, clarifying questions and concerns; the other became an active participant, actually initiating a solution and writing a proposal that advanced it. The first didn't mind presenting divergent information or disagreeing with parents, while the second took care to filter all information so that the parents would hear what he thought they wanted to hear. The first's behavior of providing information and clarification worked, in this case, to minimize conflict between the community and the school system (p. 84), while the second's behavior actually heightened the conflict between the two groups (p. 85).

Functioning in this political role creates tensions for principals who are trying to be responsive both to communities and superiors. The resultant behaviors are the ways individuals respond to tensions and attempts at conflict minimization. Both men, according to the community leaders and the area superintendent, took an "active" and "visible" role in the proceedings (p. 90);

however, the one who stepped beyond the consultant role, the one who took the most risks by initiating a solution, was perceived as the least successful. Implicit in all of this is the point that following the literature's general guidelines for principals may not necessarily make a principal politically successful. The principal's political role is complex, difficult to execute, and quite sensitive to local context.

For example, these data suggest that principals, in playing the role of consultant, must continually monitor their actions in order to be certain their behaviors 1) are in line with local community and superior expectations, and 2) do not create or heighten conflict between the citizens and the school system. It may also be the principal's responsibility to educate the community if its expectations of the school system and/or the community are not realistic or compatible. The effective principal, Martin, was seen as "active" in the sense of being a good listener, a diplomat who clarified concerns and provided accurate information while remaining neutral; a true consultant. He was also the principal who consistently requested feedback from citizens and superiors because as he said, he "wanted to be on the right track" (pp. 90-1).

By contrast, Barton, the man who "acted" by writing a proposal, was seen as the ineffective principal, the man who promised everything and delivered nothing but an unrealistic proposal. In his desire to help his students, he initiated a solution to his school's problem; however, he misframed the issue and channeled his community's energy in an area which the board of education could not support (p. 91). Although the action Barton took was reasonable, received initial community support, and stemmed from noble intentions ("this is for the good of the kids"), it was not compatible with local school system policy.

In sum, these data suggest that principals, to be politically effective must have an awareness of local issues and their relation to local school system policies and practices. Principals must also know what is feasible in terms of local school and community politics, and must pay attention to the needs of community leaders.

#### Suggestions for Future Study

Implications for the training and supervising of principals were raised by this study. How or where did

Martin learn to behave the way he did? Would similar training have had an impact on Barton? Training programs could probably help aspiring principals learn how to identify issues and frame them, and how to use their knowledge. But, is this happening?

The area superintendent, as a side note during her interview, reflected upon the opportunity she had missed by not openly discussing the dynamics of the situation with the principals. She felt that she had lost a "teachable moment" for such a discussion could have given the principals greater insight into their roles which could ultimately affect their performance. It is easy to say "be a consultant, be a support"; it is not so easy to do.

Perhaps supervisors and trainers of principals should look for or create those "teachable moments" that would assist principals in analyzing how they function in their political role. Discussions of situations and issues, including how they interface with school system policies, would help principals assess community needs and determine appropriate actions.

Because of such questions raised by this study, it is recommended that more studies of this type be conducted in different locales with different issues to gather

additional specifics of principals' functioning in a political role. After such work has been done, then training programs can be reviewed to determine whether they are providing appropriate instruction to aspiring principals.

The literature in general, and this study in particular, points out that principals think and worry a great deal about walking that fine line between supporting their communities and being loyal to their school systems; what these sources don't illustrate is how to teach principals to walk that tightrope without losing their creativity and desire to take risks. This would be another area for future study.

Last, the area superintendent, during her interview, touched upon another concept that was intriguing to this researcher, but because it went beyond the scope of this study, was not dealt with. This supervisor of forty-five principals talked of principals as "power brokers" but admitted that many of them either did not understand, were unaware, or misused this aspect of their position. She felt that this dimension of a principal's political role stemmed from the principal teaching community members leadership skills and could be - as it was for her - most rewarding; however, because of what she termed "the

potential for principals abusing" these relationships, be it letting parents dictate school policy or setting them up to do the principal's "dirty work", she did not directly discuss this with her principals. Research in this area would add another dimension to the knowledge of the political role of principals.

The results of this study, while on a very narrow scale, add detail to the theories put forth in the literature and, because of this detail, can offer, to principals, specific kinds of behaviors that were viewed as effective as well as certain positive advice to those individuals desiring, or currently serving in, the principalship.

In conclusion, the exercise of the political role creates tensions for principals; but, at the same time provides the challenge that allows principals to respond to communities in a way that increases their power to provide quality education.

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**APPENDIX A**

**DATA TAXONOMIES**

## KINDS OF CITIZEN ACTIONS

- I. High Level of Effort
  - A. serve as PTA president
  - B. run for office
  - C. serve on task force
  - D. testify at hearings
  - E. write proposal
  
- II. Mid Level of Effort
  - A. write articles
  - B. lobby BOE
  - C. gather data
  - D. write letters
  - E. lobby county council
  - F. lobby state delegates
  - G. serve on committees
  - H. scare tactics
  - I. attend meetings
  - J. send telegrams
  - K. attend hearings
  - L. monitor BOE
  - M. meet with superintendent
  - N. participate vocally
  
- III. Low Level of Effort
  - A. urge involvement
  - B. band together
  - C. discuss problem
  - D. make calls
  - E. invite superintendent to talk
  - F. make recommendations
  - G. submit questions/comments
  - H. read report

**-KINDS OF CITIZEN CONCERNS**

- I. Bricks and Mortar Issues
  - A. overcrowding
    - 1. oversized classes
    - 2. undersized classes at distant school
    - 3. resources need to be channeled for relief
  - B. facilities
    - 1. controls and limits program
    - 2. overutilization of buildings
    - 3. resources need to be channeled for relief
  - C. transportation
    - 1. not enough buses
    - 2. distances are too far to travel
- II. Value Issues
  - A. program equity
    - 1. disparate staffing standards
    - 2. disparate educational opportunities
    - 3. inferior programs
    - 4. "we don't get our fair share"

**KINDS OF PRINCIPAL ACTIONS CITIZENS EXPECT**

- I. Expert Actions
  - A. attends meetings
  - B. be present when parents testify
  - C. provides information
  - D. communicates issues to community
  - E. responds to requests
  - F. "stay objective"
  - G. "problem solver"
  - H. provides knowledge about the school system
  - I. serves as a resource
  - J. serves as an education expert
  - K. educates the community
  - L. open door access
- II. Advocacy Actions
  - A. lobby parents to support the school
  - B. supports community needs
  - C. describes conditions
  - D. be an advocate for the school
  - E. "correct gross errors"
  - F. be present when parents testify

## KINDS OF PRINCIPAL ACTIONS SUPERIORS EXPECT

- I. Expert Actions
  - A. served on task force
  - B. be aware of issues
  - C. provides accurate information
  - D. educates community
  - E. helps community negotiate school system
  - F. clarifies questions/information
  - G. serves as a resource
  - H. be visible at meetings
  - I. remains neutral on controversial issues
- II. Advocacy Actions
  - A. assesses school program
  - B. recommends improvements
  - C. represents school to BOE
  - D. frames issues and present to community
  - E. be an advocate for the school

## WAYS PRINCIPALS ACT (TO MEET EXPECTATIONS)

- I. Expert Actions
  - A. serves on task force
  - B. clarifies questions/information
  - C. provides information/examples
  - D. remains neutral on controversial issues
  - E. serves as a facilitator
  - F. serves as a resource
  - G. serves as an education expert
  - H. gathers data
  - I. seeks feedback from citizens
  - J. seeks feedback from superiors
  - K. meets with parents to review testimony for accuracy
  - L. open door to listen to concerns
  - M. serves as a researcher
  - N. writes articles for newsletter
  - O. acknowledges citizen effectiveness
  - P. writes notes to citizens
- II. Advocacy Actions
  - A. informal discussions with citizens
  - B. talks with citizens to "expand values"
  - C. designs new programs
  - D. details needs of the school
  - E. leads discussions
  - F. proposes solutions to problems

- G. gives personal opinion
- H. writes controversial proposal
- I. assists in editing report
- J. defends proposal
- K. "walks a tightrope"
- L. provide superiors with information
- M. "glad-hands"

#### KINDS OF SKILLS PRINCIPALS NEED

- I. Communications
  - A. oral
  - B. written
  - C. listening
  - D. clarifying
- II. Human Relations
  - A. flexibility
  - B. sensitivity
  - C. diplomacy
- III. Management
  - A. planning
  - B. organization
  - C. knowledge of policies and procedures
  - D. knowledge of content
- IV. Leadership
  - A. teaching
  - B. problem solving
  - C. knowledge of process
  - D. creativity

#### WAYS SKILLS ARE PERCEIVED

- I. Performance Based (concrete)
  - A. orderliness of school
  - B. utilization of available resources
  - C. follow-up actions to requests
  - D. accuracy of information
  - E. appropriateness of solutions to problems
  - F. timely feedback
  - G. visible participation
- II. Value Based (abstract)
  - A. actions in line with citizen expectations

- B. personal respect

**THINGS THAT INFLUENCE PERCEPTIONS**

- I. Performance Based (concrete)
  - A. accuracy of information
  - B. constraints of labor contracts
  - C. orderliness of school
  - D. depth of knowledge
  
- III. Value Based (abstract)
  - A. trust
  - B. humanitarian concerns
  - C. personal stature (reputation)
  - E. mutual respect
  - F. personal agendas
  - G. similarity of values

**APPENDIX B**

**DATA PARADIGM**

concern	type	community	action	effort
overcrowding	\$	c	urge involvement	2
overcrowding	\$	c	urge involvement	2
overcrowding	\$	cn	lobby BOE	6
overcrowding	\$	n	wrote proposal	10
overcrowding	\$	n	wrote proposal	10
overcrowding	\$	n	monitor BOE	4
overcrowding	\$	n	make recommendation	2
overcrowding	\$	n	none	0
program equity	v	c	run for BOE	10
program equity	v	c	serve on TF	10
program equity	v	c	serve on TF	10
program equity	v	c	serve on TF	10
program equity	v	c	serve on TF	10
program equity	v	c	serve on TF	10
program equity	v	c	testify at hearing	10
program equity	v	c	lobby BOE	6
program equity	v	c	serve on committees	6
program equity	v	c	gather data	4
program equity	v	c	meet wt supt	4
program equity	v	c	monitor BOE	4
program equity	v	c	write letters	4
program equity	v	c	write letters	4
program equity	v	c	make calls	2
program equity	v	c	make recommendation	2
program equity	v	c	make recommendation	2
program equity	v	cn	lobby state delegat	6
program equity	v	cn	write letters	4
program equity	v	n	serve on TF	10
program equity	v	n	serve on TF	10
program equity	v	n	serve on TF	10
program equity	v	n	testify at hearing	10
program equity	v	n	wrote proposal	10
program equity	v	n	wrote proposal	10
program equity	v	n	lobby BOE	6
program equity	v	n	lobby city council	6
program equity	v	n	lobby sch system	6
program equity	v	n	attend BOE meeting	4
program equity	v	n	gather data	4
program equity	v	n	gather data	4
program equity	v	n	gather data	4
program equity	v	n	host BOE	4
program equity	v	n	monitor BOE	4
program equity	v	n	monitor BOE	4
program equity	v	n	write letters	4
program equity	v	n	make recommendation	4
program equity	v	n	make recommendation	2
program equity	v	n	make recommendation	2
program equity	v	n	participate vocally	2
program equity	v	n	participate vocally	2
program equity	v	n	read report	2
program equity	v	n	submit comments/que	2
transportation	\$	c	serve on TF	10
transportation	\$	c	serve on TF	10
transportation	\$	c	testify at hearing	10
transportation	\$	c	testify at hearing	10
transportation	\$	c	lobby city council	6
transportation	\$	c	attend meetings	4
transportation	\$	c	gather data	4
transportation	\$	c	monitor BOE	4
transportation	\$	c	make recommendation	2
transportation	\$	c	make recommendation	2
transportation	\$	c	participate vocally	2
transportation	\$	n	gather data	4
transportation	\$	n	gather data	4
transportation	\$	n	host BOE	4
transportation	\$	n	monitor BOE	4
transportation	\$	n	monitor BOE	4
transportation	\$	n	make recommendation	2
transportation	\$	n	read report	2

concern	type	community	action	effort
allocation of \$fac	\$	c	serve on tf	10
allocation of \$fac	\$	c	lobby city council	6
allocation of \$fac	\$	c	meet wt state deleg	4
allocation of \$oc	\$	c	write article	6
allocation of prog	v	c	band together	2
allocation of prog	v	c	urge involvement	2
facilities	\$	c	run for BOE	10
facilities	\$	c	serve as PTA pres	10
facilities	\$	c	serve on TF	10
facilities	\$	c	serve on TF	10
facilities	\$	c	serve on TF	10
facilities	\$	c	serve on TF	10
facilities	\$	c	testify at hearing	10
facilities	\$	c	testify at hearing	10
facilities	\$	c	lobby BOE	6
facilities	\$	c	lobby BOE	6
facilities	\$	c	lobby city council	6
facilities	\$	c	lobby sch system	6
facilities	\$	c	scare tactics	6
facilities	\$	c	serve on committees	6
facilities	\$	c	attend BOE hearing	4
facilities	\$	c	attend hearings	4
facilities	\$	c	attend meetings	4
facilities	\$	c	gather data	4
facilities	\$	c	gather data	4
facilities	\$	c	meet wt supt	4
facilities	\$	c	monitor BOE	4
facilities	\$	c	send telegrams	4
facilities	\$	c	write letters	4
facilities	\$	c	write letters	4
facilities	\$	c	write letters	4
facilities	\$	c	write letters	4
facilities	\$	c	discuss problems	2
facilities	\$	c	invite supt to talk	2
facilities	\$	c	make calls	2
facilities	\$	c	make calls	2
facilities	\$	c	participate vocally	2
facilities	\$	c	urge involvement	2
facilities	\$	cn	lobby BOE	6
overcrowding	\$	c	serve on TF	10
overcrowding	\$	c	serve on TF	10
overcrowding	\$	c	serve on TF	10
overcrowding	\$	c	testify at hearing	10
overcrowding	\$	c	testify at hearing	10
overcrowding	\$	c	lobby BOE	6
overcrowding	\$	c	lobby BOE	6
overcrowding	\$	c	lobby city council	6
overcrowding	\$	c	lobby city council	6
overcrowding	\$	c	lobby sch system	6
overcrowding	\$	c	scare tactics	6
overcrowding	\$	c	attend BOE hearings	4
overcrowding	\$	c	attend BOE meeting	4
overcrowding	\$	c	attend meeting	4
overcrowding	\$	c	attend meetings	4
overcrowding	\$	c	gather data	4
overcrowding	\$	c	gather data	4
overcrowding	\$	c	meet wt supt	4
overcrowding	\$	c	send telegrams	4
overcrowding	\$	c	write letters	4
overcrowding	\$	c	write letters	4
overcrowding	\$	c	write letters	4
overcrowding	\$	c	write letters	4
overcrowding	\$	c	write letters	4
overcrowding	\$	c	discuss problems	2
overcrowding	\$	c	discuss problems	2
overcrowding	\$	c	invite supt to talk	2
overcrowding	\$	c	make calls	2
overcrowding	\$	c	make calls	2
overcrowding	\$	c	make recommendation	2
overcrowding	\$	c	make recommendation	2
overcrowding	\$	c	participate vocally	2

**APPENDIX C**

**LIST OF ANALYZED DOCUMENTS**

date	document
9-28-83	BCE letter to TF appointees
9-26-83	BOE meeting minutes
9-19-84	BOE meeting minutes
9-13-83	BOE meeting minutes
8-9-83	BOE meeting minutes
12-13-83	BOE meeting minutes
11-21-83	BOE meeting minutes
10-24-83	BOE meeting minutes
10-10-83	calendar of TF meetings
9-5-83	Center PTA Newsletter
4-3-84	Center PTA Newsletter
11-3-83	Center PTA Newsletter
9-19-85	interview wt area supt
10-14-85	interview wt Barton
10-3-85	interview wt Green
10-1-85	interview wt Martin
9-30-85	interview wt Smith
12-19-83	letter - fr supt to parent
11-29-83	letter fr Smith
10-26-83	letter fr TF to state delegate
11-30-83	letter to editors, mayors
10-14-83	letter to editors, mayors
11-23-83	letter to Smith
12-5-83	letter to TF fr Smith & Green
9-26-83	memo - BOE action sheet
12-13-83	memo - BOE action sheet
10-24-83	memo - BOE action sheet
1-23-84	memo - BOE information pkt
10-18-83	memo fr area supt to principals
10-24-83	memo fr PTA to Smith
10-21-83	memo fr PTA to Smith
10-19-83	memo fr Smith to TF .
8-12-83	memo from area supt
11-21-83	memo to BOE fr board member
9-28-83	newspaper article
9-22-83	newspaper article
9-15-83	newspaper article
11-28-83	newspaper article
11-23-83	newspaper article
11-23-83	newspaper article
11-19-83	newspaper article
11-18-83	newspaper article
10-5-83	newspaper article
10-29-83	newspaper article
10-26-83	newspaper article
10-12-83	newspaper article
10-2-83	North PTA Newsletter
9-19-84	North report to BOE
9-19-84	notes BCE meeting
11-21-83	notes BCE meeting
11-7-83	notes TF meeting
11-14-83	notes TF meeting
10-31-83	notes TF meeting

<b>date</b>	<b>document</b>
10-27-83	notes TF meeting
10-26-83	notes TF meeting
10-24-83	notes TF meeting
10-24-83	notes TF meeting
10-20-83	notes TF meeting
10-19-83	notes TF meeting
10-17-83	notes TF meeting
10-17-83	notes TF meeting
10-14-83	notes TF meeting
10-13-83	notes TF meeting
10-13-83	notes TF meeting
10-10-83	notes TF meeting
10-1-83	operational costs per secondary sch
9-29-83	Supt letter to TF appointees
10-26-83	TF exec meeting minutes
11-21-83	TF final report
10-19-83	TF subcommittee report
10-17-83	TF subcommittee report

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