

VOLUME V NUMBER 2 OCTOBER 1993

Catalyst

VOICES OF CHICAGO SCHOOL REFORM

The New Extended Family: Collaborating for kids' sake

Untangling government a mission impossible?

by Michael Selinker and Dan Weissmann

Just as President Bill Clinton is pushing to re-invent the federal government to make it work better, top-level Illinois and Chicago leaders are exploring ways to re-invent their governments so that they serve children better.

Three panels of agency leaders are taking up the challenge, but experience elsewhere shows it may be among the most difficult challenges these leaders have ever faced.

■ The heads of Chicago's largest board-governed agencies, including the

Board of Education and the Chicago Housing Authority, have joined with a number of private-sector leaders to form the Chicago Cluster Initiative, which is just now beginning its large-scale plans for children in four disadvantaged communities. (See story at right.)

■ Mayor Richard M. Daley is expected to announce soon his Youth Development Task Force. Adele Simmons, president of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, is expected to chair the group.

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Top city leaders dream big, take tiny steps

by Dan Weissmann

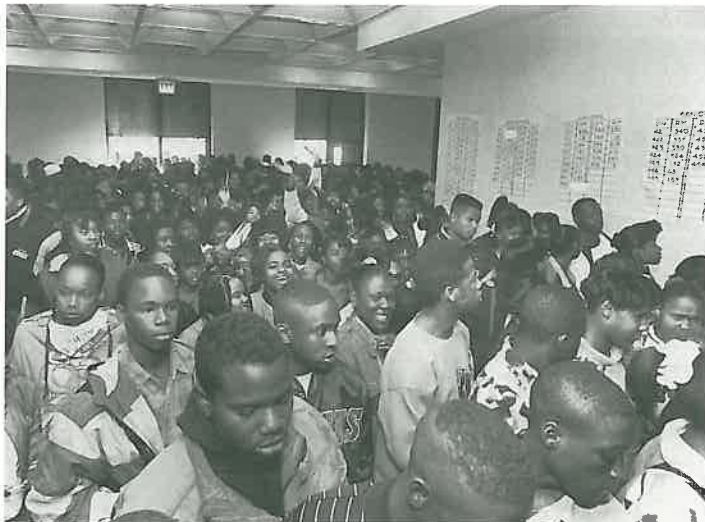
Why can't the heads of city agencies like the schools and the park district and police department just get together and figure out how to pool their resources for kids? After all, many parks sit right across the street from schools, and kids who live in city-run housing projects walk down streets patrolled by city police.

And why not include the private non-profit groups and community-based organizations that target the same kids and communities? Why can't the people who control all those resources work and plan together?

Three years ago, a number of city leaders asked themselves the same questions and formed the Chicago Cluster Initiative to see whether public and private agencies could work together. They agreed to mesh resources in the trou-

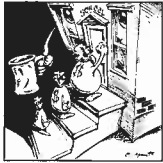
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On the opening day of school, students at Hyde Park Career Academy crowd into the front hallway. High schools now have longer class periods, resulting in fewer study halls and shorter labs. See story in Updates, page 23.



JOHN BOOZ

In This Issue: Looking for leadership



As CATALYST goes to press, schools were open—a week late—under a temporary federal court order, but the School Board, Chicago Teachers Union and Legislature were far from agreement on how to *keep* them open.

The CTU had delayed a strike vote but paved the way for a vote on whether to approve a loan to the School Board from pension funds. Three years ago, union leaders went along with a temporary diversion of pension money—the teacher fund is exceptionally healthy—to help pay for a three-year contract; after the fact, the rank and file raised an enormous ruckus. This year, when the Legislature refused to continue the diversion without the union's OK, President Jacqueline Vaughn decided to toss the issue to her members.

Meanwhile, school reformers were increasingly anxious that part of this year's installment of state Chapter 1 funds would be diverted toward a contract solution.

So what happens next year or two years from now—assuming the current crisis eventually gets patched with another Band-Aid solution? More of the same. Edna Pardo of the League of Women Voters makes a persuasive argument for a real, permanent solution—a graduated income tax—in this month's Opinions section.

■
“If there were more coordination between city and county services—if there were a way for these agencies to work together—we could solve a lot of problems. If these services were coordinated—if there were just one number you could call—it would save so much time and so many kids.”

That plea, uttered by former Guggenheim Elementary Principal Michael Alexander, ended the lead article in Part 1 of “The New Extended Family,” CATALYST's three-part series on forging partnerships to serve the many needs of children.

In Part 2, CATALYST now looks at ways government

leaders and major foundations in Illinois, Chicago and other states and cities are trying to create environments that promote collaboration. Locally, the picture is grim.

As Judy Carter, executive director of the Family Resource Coalition, says, “Illinois is nowhere in terms of leadership from either the state or the schools.”

The coalition, a national organization based in Chicago, has been working with a number of states both to make their bureaucracies function better for kids and to help them draw on resources within communities. Kentucky is one of the leading lights.

As part of a wholesale restructuring of its school system, Kentucky is making grants to schools to set up family resource and youth service centers; the centers' charge is to find out what communities want and need and then to figure out ways to meet those needs, in large part with existing resources. In the third year of the program, Kentucky is spending \$26 million for 373 centers that serve 638 school communities; that's an average of \$70,000 per center. In contrast, Illinois' somewhat similar Project SUCCESS has given one-time grants, up to a maximum of \$15,000, to 39 school-communities.

Kentucky was catapulted to the head of the class in state school reform by a court that found its school-funding system unconstitutional. The state changed not only the way it did school business, but also approved a tax hike to help pay for the changes.

Meanwhile, Illinois and Chicago governments are just starting to talk about collaborating for kids' sake. The state has a new human services task force, and the city was, at press time, about to announce a youth development task force.

Next month, Part 3 in the series will examine the role of community organizations in creating a new extended family for kids.



ABOUT US DiAnne Walsh, operations director for both CATALYST and *The Chicago Reporter*, has decided to move on. She joined the Community Renewal Society in 1985 and, in 1989, played a key role in getting CATALYST up and running. DiAnne now runs the Chicago office of Metro Services Group, Inc., a marketing firm. We wish her continued success and ask readers for their patience as we learn to live without her.

Linda Long *Lorraine Forte*

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Catalyst

VOICES OF CHICAGO SCHOOL REFORM

VOLUME V NUMBER 2
OCTOBER 1993

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1993 Peter Lisagor Award, Best Newsletter.
1993 Distinguished Achievement Award,
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MISSION

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■ In February, Gov. Jim Edgar unveiled his Task Force on Human Services Reform. Heads of seven of the eight state social service agencies are members; the governor did not include the Illinois State Board of Education, reasoning it would be better instead to consult with local schools. The task force hopes to get \$10 million from the Connecticut-based Annie E. Casey Foundation to build state collaborations; task force chair Gary MacDougal is a Casey board member.

Among political insiders, there is hope that neither the city nor state task force will become, in the words of Deputy Mayor Leonard Dominguez, "just another study group."

All three bodies face the same powerful enemies: bureaucratic inertia ("This is how we've always done it"), possessiveness over turf ("This is my area") and mazes of often conflicting regulations ("This is against the rules"). It's hard enough for leaders to agree among themselves, let alone to push those agreements down through the bureaucracies and onto the front lines.

"Collaboration is now a buzzword, but it doesn't spring from whole cloth," says Sheila Radford-Hill of Chicago Cities in Schools, a non-profit group that has built networks linking schools in seven communities with 40 agencies. "We're talking about massive integrated coordination of very different systems that are separately funded, poorly defined and highly politicized. It could be your whole life's work just to get one collaborative link solidified."

No leadership

Chicago and Illinois lag behind other cities and states, some of which have been building high-level collaborations for a decade and only now are beginning to see results.

"Illinois is nowhere in terms of leadership from either the state or the schools," says Judy Carter, executive director of the Family Resource Coalition, a Chicago-based non-profit group pushing collaboration. "This will never work unless the agencies have incentive to work cooperatively and the schools have the will to totally rethink



TONY MARINOS/Superior Color Labs

Social service providers have a home in the school administration building in San Jose, Calif. Community services and the superintendent's office sit side by side. See story on page 11.

their roles in relation to the community. Parents have to demand from these people, 'Do you really want to do what's best for children?'"

Very few formal cooperative planning links exist here among government agencies that serve children. With few exceptions, city agencies budget and plan activities *within* their agencies, not *across* them; the same is true for county and state agencies. Because agencies typically draw up budgets before they start thinking about collaboration, they don't have resources "left over" for collaborative projects.

For example, last winter, former Chicago Park District Supt. Robert Penn told the Chicago Cluster Initiative's staff to submit a list of parks where the Park District could, with the Cluster's leadership, build collaborative projects with Chicago public schools. Greg Darnieder, the Cluster's chief executive officer, outlined his proposals, but Park District staffers rejected each one as impossible, explaining that budgets had already been set. The fact that the parks superintendent was forwarding the request apparently made no difference.

Often, agencies see each other as obstacles or competitors. For example, the Board of Education and the city's Department of Human Services spent two years playing tug-of-war in the transfer of Head Start services from the school system to non-profit groups. Each side accused the other of obstructionism; in the process, many children missed out on months of service.

However, the recent cooperation among school, park and police bureau-

cracies to provide alternative activities for kids when schools were closed offers some hope. The police even scouted potential sites, including park field-houses and private recreational facilities like the YMCA.

A rare, ongoing success story is a three-year-old partnership between the Chicago Police Department and the Chicago Public Schools' Department of Safety and Security. Safety's 910 security personnel work hand-in-hand with the 238 police officers in Daley's School Patrol. Two officers are assigned to each high school, and 96 "rover cars" respond to crises in the schools. Each year, police make about 10,000 arrests in high schools, one for every three students.

"The cooperation and rapport that has developed between the board and the police has been so helpful," says Safety's George Sams, who retired in June. "You have first-name knowledge of the people over there who can help."

"With the police in the high school they can stop a problem before it escalates," he continues. "The students will tell the policeman who's got the gun, and they'll be on top of it. Before, the kid told the teacher, and the teacher *might* tell the principal, and the principal *might* tell the policeman, and the policeman *might* make an arrest four days later."

Some new agency heads have espoused policies that would aid cooperative planning at the community level. New schools Supt. Argie Johnson, parks Supt. Forrest Claypool and police Supt. Matthew Rodriguez all have advocated decentralization and shared deci-

sion making. Though the schools constitute the only decentralized system, parks have been divided into clusters—courtesy of a federal court order—and police are experimenting with community policing, intended in part to make decision making more responsive to local situations.

The state has two programs that promote partnerships: Urban Education Partnership grants (discussed in CATALYST's September issue) and Project SUCCESS, which gives assistance and one-time grants of up to \$15,000 to schools and community institutions that want to build collaborations. Last year, there were six such collaborations statewide; this year 33 more were added.

The grants are used to meet unique community needs. For example, Haugan Elementary on the North Side used its grant last year to station an Illinois Department of Public Aid worker in the school one day a week, and to immunize children at Haugan on the first day of school last year.

This year, Haugan and its partner, Albany Park Community Center, are continuing the program on their own, which is what the state wants. "When the state cuts back, it makes you be a little more self-sufficient," says Principal Terrence Murray.

Funding restricts collaboration

But Radford-Hill scoffs at the state's overall effort. "There is nothing here that is valid, reliable or fair regarding collaboration. If you'd call the state of Illinois and ask for a policy statement on collaboration, you'd get nothing."

Restrictions tied to both public and private funding are a major impediment to collaboration. "Most of the money that community-based agencies, schools and other service providers receive is earmarked for direct service," Radford-Hill says. "It's like putting in money to build a house but none to hire a construction manager—which is a nightmare."

The effect, she points out, is that government and foundations spend billions on uncoordinated social services, which typically remain difficult for people to obtain, ignore differences among communities and have only a scatter-shot effect on city problems.

Recently, however, a few large foundations—Casey, MacArthur, the Chicago

Community Trust—have begun sponsoring collaborative efforts that look beyond such narrow goals as pregnancy prevention and math tutoring.

Locally, the biggest such investment is the Trust's Children, Youth and Families Initiative, which is investing up to \$30 million over nine years to forge links among service agencies.

For example, in West Town, a Youth Options Unlimited (YOU) effort is receiving \$1.75 million from the Trust to link social service agencies that provide after-school activities. In addition to funding new programs and hiring staff coordinators, money pays for buses to get children to programs of their choice and a program guide to inform families about the options.

"It's exciting to see how barriers

Commission on Human Relations Chair Clarence Wood and other political figures.

"After sitting at the table and seeing who was in front of me, I realized that if you're going to have some repairmen come in, you had better have a list of what's broken," says Newton. "Otherwise, they can work all day and still not fix what's broken."

Leaders of the Chicago Cluster Initiative have encountered this problem. For example, staff and trustees were concerned that an idea they were considering—building a residential boarding school on Robert Taylor Homes property—would be seen as high-handed intervention. But Beethoven Elementary School Principal Lula Ford assured them emphatically that they were wrong.

"If you'd call the state of Illinois and ask for a policy on collaboration, you'd get nothing."

—Sheila Radford-Hill,
Chicago Cities in Schools

between agencies are breaking down," says Bonnie Capaul, a YOU staffer in West Town. "I notice that people who are collaborating seem to be happier. But some people are used to working in a certain way, so to change those habits is going to take some time."

But the program itself sets up some divisions, by dividing West Town into two administrative "clusters," each overseen by a different agency. "It's confusing that we're trying to break down barriers for the kids and there are some barriers set up by the model," says Capaul, who manages West Town's southeast cluster. "Youth workers don't think in clusters, nor do the kids."

Top-level initiatives also can suffer from differences in perceptions and understandings between top-level leaders and those at the grass roots.

For example, at Farragut Career Academy, a school plagued by racially motivated violence, former Principal Steve Newton, Jr. welcomed a new alliance called the Lawndale Coalition. It includes State Sen. Jesus Garcia (D-1st), Ald. Ricardo Muñoz (22nd Ward),

"My parents have bought in," she told them. "At my LSC [local school council] last year, all we talked about was a residential school. And I've bought in. I've gone into homes and seen no furniture but a mattress on the floor. I've gone into homes and seen no kitchen sink. When I first came to Beethoven in 1989, I was very depressed because I could not believe this was America."

But many other places in America go far beyond Illinois in developing policies to encourage inter-agency collaboration.

In California, state government is shifting responsibilities to county governments and providing incentives for counties to collaborate with each other. In New York City, the mayor has vested a youth commissioner with responsibility and resources to redirect many youth services. In Kentucky, Connecticut and New Jersey, state governments have established youth or family resource centers as local coordinating bodies. (See articles on pages 11-20.)

In a move called decategorization, Ohio and two Iowa counties have

removed some of the funding restrictions that make collaboration difficult. Without the restrictions, services can more readily be redirected from narrowly defined problems to conditions that may be causing those—and other—problems. The non-profit groups Ounce of Prevention Fund and Family Focus have called for decategorization of Illinois state funding.

One of the most impressive top-level collaborations is in Minneapolis, whose population slid from 520,000 in 1950 to 430,000 in 1970 to 370,000 in 1980. In an attempt to stem middle-class flight, Mayor Donald Fraser, with the authority of a state law requiring county planning councils, created a comprehensive plan for reinventing city government.

Among its main planks was a Youth Coordinating Board of elected state and city officials that works with a newly decentralized school system. As within-district school choice became a reality, other agencies tied services into the schools. Cross-agency planning began around issues like land use, school curricula, neighborhood redevelopment, noise abatement and public housing.

Fraser also organized a group of businessmen into a board called Youth Trust to coordinate investment in children as the downtown was rebuilt. Each of the 200 employers on the board recruits its employees as mentors and tutors, designs training and employment programs for kids and establishes school-business partnerships.

The population rebounded in the 1990 U.S. Census; former Minneapolis Deputy Mayor Janet Hively gives much credit to the youth initiatives, which

encouraged families to stay.

Hively, who now heads the Golden Apple Foundation in Chicago, stresses one facet of this coordinated effort: the mayor's central involvement. As a trustee of the Chicago Cluster Initiative, Hively says of Mayor Daley: "It should be his baby, shouldn't it?"

Not all top-level initiatives have worked out well. Three decades ago, top officials in Oakland, Calif., united under the banner of the Oakland Inter-Agency Project. But little changed; programs "remained encapsulated in their departments, with little relationship to each other, or even to their own administrative system," an evaluation found. The main problem was that few partners were willing to share power.

So far, the heralded New Futures Initiative of the Casey Foundation also has fallen short of expectations. Since 1988, Casey has invested \$40 million to establish "oversight collaboratives" of public and private leaders in five cities—Pittsburgh is the largest of the cities. Their charge was to concentrate resources and pool information about children, with schools serving as focal points. Each collaborative established a "case management" system for collecting data on children and matching children to caring adults.

Casey's outside evaluation found that after three years, much of the case management had merely reinforced outmoded beliefs about child and family development and had not changed service delivery or teaching substantially. A minority of schools used the opportunity to innovate, but most others stayed within old frameworks, evaluators said.

Casey is continuing its investment, hoping the collaboratives will change the governments' ways significantly.

The mixed results of top-down efforts stand as a warning that results won't come quickly.

To expect otherwise, suggests Radford-Hill of Cities in Schools, is "like saying, 'Well, we've been dealing with racism a long time in this country, and we haven't found a solution yet—what's the timeline?' In the face of massive resistance, you have to take a graduated approach, an incremental approach. Successes will be limited in their scope, but profound in their impact." ■

Michael Selinker is writing a history of the Chicago Cluster Initiative. Dan Weissmann is a contributing editor of CATALYST.

Resources

These groups provide help in building collaborations. The Casey Foundation and the Institute for Educational Leadership also provide publications.

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TONY CETSUC

Twelve-year-olds Yesnia Padilla and Angela Cardona hang out at Erie Neighborhood House in West Town. Erie is one of ten local agencies in the Youth Options Unlimited program.

DREAM

continued from page 1

bled communities around four Chicago high schools; they viewed each area as a "cluster" of resources surrounding the high school and including nearby elementary schools, parks, city housing projects and a wide range of community-based organizations.

Since then, shifting faces and shifting priorities among those leaders, plus a long delay in finding someone to run the Initiative full time, have left their efforts in low gear.

The Cluster's staff have established themselves in the four communities and made headway through various projects; with new leadership settling in at several agencies, they hope to gain new momentum soon. But for now the idea of collaboration among city agencies remains an idea with lots of potential and not much track record.

Picking 4 schools

The Chicago Cluster Initiative began as a conversation between Chicago Housing Authority Chair Vince Lane and Martin "Mike" Koldyke, head of the Golden Apple Foundation. Koldyke, who had been working for a while with DuSable High School and neighboring elementary schools around the Robert Taylor Homes, initially approached Lane "to talk about schools and how the CHA could work with Mike to improve DuSable," Lane recalls.

Once the pair started talking, it became clear that an effective effort would need the help of "some more people. . . than just the housing authority," says Lane. So Koldyke arranged a two-day retreat in October 1990 at his Michigan home; it included Lane, then-schools Supt. Ted Kimbrough; then-parks Supt. Robert Penn; James Compton, president of the Chicago Urban League; and William Sampson, head of Chicago United, a civic group made up of business leaders.

The ad hoc group agreed to work together. First they would test their ideas in a few neighborhoods, and then they would spread the successes around the city. They also agreed to recruit LeRoy Martin, then police superintendent, to join the effort.

By the end of the year, the police department had signed on. At the rec-



CHA Chairman Vince Lane at a meeting of the Chicago Cluster Initiative's board.

ommendation of Mayor Richard M. Daley, the Cluster also invited the United Neighborhood Organization (UNO), a mostly Latino political action group allied with the mayor, to join.

The Chicago Cluster Initiative's board, as the group then called itself, chose three geographically and demographically diverse high schools as the focus of their efforts: DuSable, whose student body is all African American and where Koldyke had been working; Bowen in South Chicago, whose student body is 52 percent black and 47 percent Hispanic; and Farragut, serving North Lawndale and Little Village, 33 percent black and 67 percent Hispanic. UNO was active in the Latino communities around both Bowen and Farragut.

Then the board showed its plans to Daley, who gave them an important piece of advice, says Lane. "He said, 'You've got to have a West Side school.'" So the Cluster added the all African-American Austin High School to the list and was off and running.

The group started putting together papers of incorporation, got start-up grants from the Chicago Community Trust and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and hired former gubernatorial aide Paula Wolff as a temporary chief executive while they searched for a permanent executive officer. The heads of the city agencies

got their agencies' boards to sign off on a sketchy five-year, \$50 million budget, with the agencies committing \$17 million of in-kind services for collaborative projects.

Then the program hit a few snags.

Wolff had taken the temporary director's job expecting to be done with it in two or three months; finding a permanent replacement took eight.

By the time the permanent CEO, Greg Darnieder, was in place, several of the city leaders—police Supt. LeRoy Martin, schools Supt. Ted Kimbrough and parks Supt. Robert Penn—were on their way out and, since, have been replaced. Meanwhile, City Colleges of Chicago joined the Cluster.

At the same time, the board's two leaders—Koldyke and Lane—shifted some of their priorities. Last year, Koldyke took a big new job as chair of the Chicago School Finance Authority, and Lane has been, in his own words, "always off somewhere."

Future uncertain

The Cluster "seems now to be languishing somewhat," says board member Sampson of Chicago United, blaming the board's ever-changing lineup and availability. "It's a great idea, formed with great enthusiasm by a group of very smart and very powerful people—who were all good friends." But with the departure of Kimbrough, Penn, and Martin—and the limits on Lane's and Koldyke's time—that dynamic has changed. Now, Sampson laments, "It's not like a group of friends who can say, 'Let's all get together over lunch and make this thing work.'"

UNO Director Daniel Solis concurs that the new players may not share the "vision and passion" for the project that brought the original Cluster board together.

And regardless of enthusiasm, it would be unrealistic to expect energetic participation right away from the relatively new agency heads, Sampson points out. "They don't have time to deal with Cluster stuff because they're busy getting to know their jobs." Indeed, new schools Supt. Argie Johnson and City Colleges chief Ron Temple have yet to officially join the Cluster's board—partly because Cluster Chairman Lane's own busy schedule has pushed off initial meetings.

There is even some question about

how clearly defined the Cluster's task was from the start. "I think that the whole project is more global than anyone may have thought," says Deputy Mayor for Education Leonard Dominguez, who has sat on the Cluster's board since early 1992. "We are really talking about rebuilding entire communities, with schools at the center."

Dominguez sees the temperament of many board members as an obstacle to that global project.

"These are all bottom-line people," he explains. "They say, 'Let's get things done.' They may be able to talk about collaboration and cooperation, but they may not understand the difference between them. They may be able to cooperate on a specific project," but collaboration involves pooling their basic resources over the long-term, which takes more effort and patience.

Visible progress has been slow. One of the first projects proposed for the Cluster was to renovate vacant apartments in the Robert Taylor Homes and turn them into study centers; in 1991, the Cluster started working on a plan to open six such centers—one for each of the elementary schools in the DuSable cluster. So far, only one has

been opened.

At times, board members also have been slow to respond to staff requests. At a trustee meeting last spring, for example, one of the Cluster coordinators asked the agency heads to provide comprehensive lists of their activities in her area. It would be helpful, she indicated, to know what there was to coordinate. She's still waiting for the list.

'Funny money'

And in-kind contributions from the trustee agencies have amounted to barely a fraction of what was planned. In the last year, according to a document prepared by Darnieder, the agencies and private groups involved kicked in \$358,910. Since the original proposed budget called for more than \$17 million from the agencies over five years, it seems the board has a lot of catching up to do.

But this does not surprise Darnieder. The \$50 million budget was "funny money," he says. "and those were funny programs," castles built in the air, sometimes without even consulting anyone in the targeted communities.

Dominguez of the mayor's office agrees that the multimillion dollar projections were "more symbolic than real."

Since Darnieder arrived only a year and a half ago, however, Cluster staff have made real inroads into the four communities. They have established relationships with many of the grassroots institutions in those communities, including local school councils and social service agencies; they have stimulated interest in school restructuring at 17 schools; three of the four clusters are discussing major projects; and staff have completed their first project, an innovative summer jobs program that was at least a modest success. (See story on this page.)

The staff's efforts have gained them some solid allies in the four cluster communities. For instance, Bowen High School Principal Gloria Walker calls the Cluster's local site director, Jerry Bell, "the backbone of the school this year. He's brought so many things here. He keeps saying, 'Am I going too fast for you? Am I going too fast for you?' I say, 'Keep right on going, and I'll see if I can't keep up with you.'"

One project the Cluster has encouraged at all of its sites is school restruc-

At Bowen, teens created their own summer jobs

Last summer, the Chicago Cluster Initiative completed its first project, with a few stumbles along the way. Each of its four clusters hosted Teamworks, a summer jobs program that paired teenage workers with younger kids for tutoring and for community service projects.

The program got off to a rocky start: For a while last spring, it looked like the expected federal funding might not come through. Funding was finally confirmed only a week before the program was to begin. However, since government-funded jobs were scarce this summer, hiring 104 teens on short notice turned out to be fairly easy; recruiting elementary school kids for the teens to work with was not. The original plan had called for each teen to work with two younger kids, but the ratio wound up being more like one-to-one at most sites.

"For the first couple of weeks, we

just sort of floated," says Raymond Dozier, one of two teachers who oversaw the program at Bowen High School. "The high school students didn't really know what they were supposed to do. They'd say, 'Well, we're here to tutor the elementary school students.' And we'd say, 'Well, we don't have any.' . . . They were perfectly content to just read the paper."

Dozier and co-leader Leslie Logan-Beard solved this problem by turning it into an opportunity. Recruiting elementary schoolers became the teenagers' first project; they made flyers and leaflets, and they canvassed the neighborhood, stopping in laundromats and knocking on doors. Eventually, they recruited a few dozen kids.

The Bowen teams continued to improvise throughout the summer, with mixed results. A clothing drive for the homeless brought in plenty of clothes, but finding an organization to

distribute them turned out to be harder than expected. The younger kids were excited about a project cleaning graffiti off Bowen's walls but were frustrated to find that almost as soon as a wall got cleaned, it got "tagged" again. A nearby senior citizens home eventually responded to the teams' offers to start an adopt-a-senior program, but, by then, the summer was over.

A multicultural performance fair ended the summer on an upbeat note, playing to an appreciative audience that included kids from the Teamworks group at Austin High.

What's more, participants gave the program rave reviews. One elementary school teamworker called the program "great, fun, active, intelligent."

Said Juan Drake, a junior at Bowen, "The best part of is that this showed you how to be with people. I used to be real shy."

Dan Weissmann

turing, with help from the Small Schools Workshop at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The Cluster gave some small planning grants to schools and led field trips to New York for principals, teachers and LSC reps; the Small Schools Workshop pitched in with a chunk of time from organizer Pat Ford, who keeps an office at the Cluster. Eight Cluster schools were planning to open new minischools this year, including Austin, Bowen and DuSable.

At the request of the board, the staff also have developed ambitious "signature" projects for three of the four clusters. The projects range from the economic redevelopment of a mile-long stretch of Central Avenue in Austin to the creation of a boarding school in CHA-owned buildings for students living in the gang- and drug-infested Robert Taylor Homes. It remains to be seen whether these plans will become reality.

The trustees, in view of their limited availability, have chosen stand-ins to maintain the effort. An Inter-Agency Working Group, with representatives from each institution on the board, has been meeting since June.

Sampson emphasizes that if the Cluster Initiative seems stalled, the blame lies with the board, not the staff. "But I agree with Greg that we need to pump some life into this thing. And pretty soon."

'Signature' projects on deck

Dominguez thinks that concentrating on the "signature" projects is the best way to do that. "I think these projects ought to move along in the next three or four months," he says. "There ought to be some movement, some visible progress on one, or even on all of them."

"Everybody wants to do outreach, all this touchy-feely stuff, instead of just putting something out there and asking, 'What are your objections? Where are we, where do we need to go, and how do we get there?'"

"I think the leadership will respond to specific requests for help—that's not collaboration necessarily—but you get the job done," Dominguez says. "And the only way you get to [long-term, integrated collaboration] is by implementing your projects, finding out where the bugs are, making the changes that need to be made, and going on from there." ■

Cluster caught up in Farragut wars

Chicago Cluster Initiative Trustee Meeting

June 8, 1993

Topic: Farragut Career Academy, a fractious school that has resisted Cluster efforts.

Janet Hively, Golden Apple Foundation: "If political change doesn't happen there, do we move our resources to another place?"

Leonard Dominguez, Mayor's Office: "We don't want to wait until this problem is not just Farragut but five or 10 locations. We want to confront this now, not in five or 10 years."

William Sampson, Chicago United: "We have no choice but to stay. By walking away, you say, 'You can keep on doing what you're doing.' We have to show that responsible people will not stand for this. If not, it'll get much worse than New York City. This will be impossible to address 10 years from now."

Vince Lane, Chicago Housing Authority: "When we talked about the clusters, this one was controversial. . . . But why just take the easy ones?"

by Michael Selinker and
Dan Weissmann

2:30 p.m., June 15, 1993. In a half hour, Farragut Career Academy sophomore Elisa Carlin would enter the rarest of local school council meetings—one called by a student LSC member. Elisa had called it because she was outraged. A week earlier, a group called the Chicago Cluster Initiative had come before her LSC with an offer of 30 summer jobs for Farragut students as part of the Cluster's Teamworks program. The LSC turned it down. Now, Elisa wanted a rehearing.

"These people came in offering jobs for students, and they turned it down like it was *nothing!*" Elisa said, her voice rising. "Thirty jobs is 30 jobs, it's not nothing!"

Given the paucity of jobs in Lawndale and Little Village, the LSC's action seems baffling. Yet in the racially charged environment of Farragut, the LSC is a battlefield, and outsiders risk getting pulled into the conflict.

In this case, the outsiders were the staff of the Cluster, a downtown-based

non-profit group backed by heads of major public and private agencies. The troubled relationship between the Cluster and Farragut illustrates the dangers downtown leaders may encounter when they step into communities.

And Farragut's community has been a particularly turbulent one. In 1955, Farragut's graduating class was entirely white. In 1975, it was entirely black. In 1985, it was half black and half Latino. And if current enrollment trends continue, in 1995 it could be entirely Latino.

In recent years, these racial dynamics have threatened to rip the school apart. Violence between warring black and Latino gangs forced former Principal Steve Newton, Jr. to shut Farragut down on several occasions.

School politics have been just as explosive: Parents on the LSC, all Latino, constantly fought with Newton, an African American who left in August to become principal of Marshall High School. But the politics among Latinos at Farragut are not monolithic. To a large extent, they divide between allies and opponents of the United Neighborhood Organization (UNO), a Latino political

action group; several UNO opponents sit on the school's LSC.

When the Cluster came to Farragut, UNO's enemies immediately viewed the group as an extension of UNO. After all, UNO Executive Director Daniel Solis sits on the Cluster's board of trustees, and the Cluster's site director for Lawndale and Little Village, Madeleine Philbin, previously was acting director of UNO in Little Village.

With Newton's approval, Philbin had been organizing in the name of the "Farragut Cluster," even though the Farragut LSC had not officially welcomed the project to the school. Philbin had organized a council of students from local grade schools; in May, the Cluster and the youth council staged an awards ceremony honoring local educational leaders. By then, the LSC had expressly asked that the body not be called the Farragut Youth Council.

LSC vents anger

Several LSC members felt the Cluster was flouting their directions and that Philbin and Newton were giving them the runaround. After repeatedly finding the LSC hostile, several Cluster trustees argued for getting out of Farragut. But at a June 8 meeting, the board decided to stay.

The next day, the Farragut LSC rejected the Cluster's offer of 30 jobs.

At the rehearing called by Elisa Carlin, LSC Chair Maria Muñoz vented

her own anger. "Who has given you the authority to come here?" she demanded in Spanish of Cluster CEO Greg Darnieder, who was making his first appearance before the LSC. "And who gave you permission to use our name in the first place, when no one here has said so?"

Faculty representative Robert Cardenas echoed her concern. "There is a perception in the community that we are gung-ho working with [the Cluster]. We are not."

Darnieder tried to assuage the council. "All I can say is, I hear you and I apologize that it has become an issue at this level," he said. "I would hope that today would be the beginning of a relationship between this body and me. I'm asking you to trust me."

After hours of arguing, the council agreed to accept the jobs, provided that the Cluster would stop using the names "Farragut Cluster" and "Farragut Youth Council."

The next day the Mayor's Office for Employment and Training joined with the newly named Lawndale/ Little Village Cluster to open registration for the Cluster's teen jobs program, called Teamworks. Three children of LSC members who had initially voted against the jobs were the first to sign up, Darnieder says.

Teamworks, which paired teenagers with younger kids for community service projects, was assigned a study hall covered with gang graffiti for a home base. "The room we were in was the room that everybody tags to show their

displeasure with everything that's going on at the school," said Teamworks teacher Ricardo Isom. "It was worse than a CTA car."

The younger kids asked that their service project be to clean up the room, but the school wouldn't let them, Isom says. And when the Teamworks group wanted to hold a multiracial unity fair at Farragut, the school turned that down too. The fair was held, instead, at a church a mile and a half away.

At the same time, however, Philbin conducted a two-week workshop on creating schools-within-schools for representatives from Farragut and its feeder elementary schools; the workshop was held in a Farragut classroom. Teachers at the workshop swore they would bring the small schools they designed to fruition at Farragut.

And whatever else happens, faces on the LSC will change in October. At least three parents have moved out of Chicago or seen their children graduate, one teacher has taken early retirement, Newton has gone to Marshall and Carlin says she wants to have fun next year instead of being on the LSC.

Meanwhile, Philbin continues to develop relationships in the community. She has solidified links with principals and LSCs in Farragut's feeder schools and is holding community meetings in local churches.

"The Farragut LSC thought that our existence depended on their vote," Philbin says. "Their yes-or-no vote determined [only] whether *they* wanted to be involved." ■

The Cluster's Teamworks program at Farragut was housed in a study hall covered with gang graffiti. Students asked to be allowed to paint over the walls, but according to a teacher, the school said no.



TONY GERISIC

Elsewhere: California

'Pink Palace' offers one-stop service



TONY MARINO/Superior Color Labs

From computer labs to a health clinic, San Jose's Pink Palace has it all.

by Michael Selinker

Tears well in Ken Van Otten's eyes as he begins to talk about "Kellogg's," a freckle-faced seven-year-old "so cute he could sell corn flakes." Van Otten, principal of McKinley Elementary School in San Jose, Calif., opens a bulging folder, and a sad litany flows out: "Stole materials, hit others in class, threw food in cafeteria, stabbed children with safety pins, threw rocks at children's heads, cut child's arm in door...." He could go on, but his point is made.

For months, Van Otten had banged against bureaucratic walls, trying to get someone to help the child, who suffered the indignity of living in a doghouse, the pain of abuse by his father and the trauma of seeing his mother shot. The principal discovered that the child had been visited by court officers, probation officers and child service workers, but that none had communicated with each other and none had really helped.

Finally, Van Otten took the child's case to a high court of sorts. Arrayed before him were ranking officials from

the school district, the police, the courts and health departments, all saying they'd help.

"All of a sudden I started getting calls from people I'd never met," he says. "They arranged counseling, physical and psychiatric exams, threats against his father, you name it. The system in its original sense let this kid down, but the new system at least has started him on the long road to therapy."

The center of this new system is the "Pink Palace," a salmon-colored warehouse set against the Diablo Mountains. There, in the last two years, the 10,000-student Franklin-McKinley School District has quietly forged what may be the largest true service collaboration in America.

The spark was the district's need for a new administration building. "We had outgrown the space," explains Jim Abbott, currently the district's interim superintendent. "We never had the maintenance department near us; our psychologists were in a trailer out back; frozen food services were across town behind a school. We couldn't operate efficiently."

So Abbott and then-Supt. Dolores Ballesteros arranged to buy an unused, 80,000-square-foot warehouse, empty up to the rafters. But then the district

had far more space than it needed. Ballesteros came up with a simple but revolutionary idea: Invite all the local child-service agencies to move in, rent free. They jumped at the chance.

In the new District Service Center, you take a right from Abbott's office and you pass by the city park district's anti-gang bureau, a probation officer, a San Jose Medical Center health clinic, a county dental clinic and a daycare center. Hang a left and you find a children's museum supply room, a computer training center and a multimedia science center. In the middle are the district's education divisions.

Families can now make visits to various departments in a single afternoon. If services were spread across the city, that might take days, or it might not happen at all.

"It's so difficult," says Vinita Kylin, a translator in Cambodian. "Sometimes [families] don't show up, but they don't even know how to call." Once they do show up, Kylin and other translators make their hunt for help much easier.

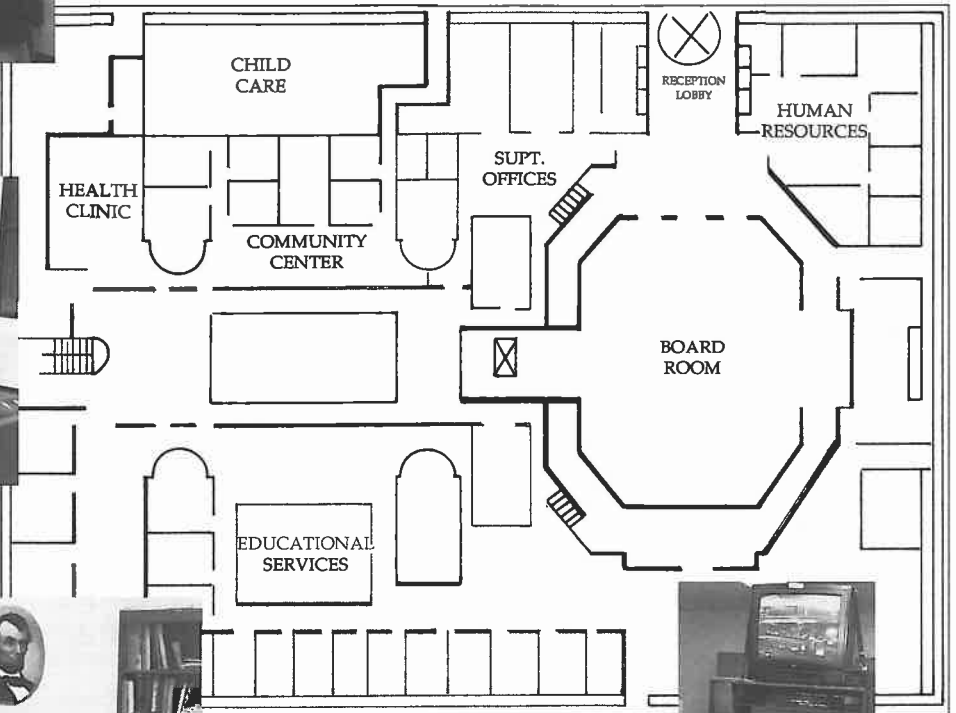
Half the students in the San Jose district are limited-English-proficient. A recent multischool dance show featured, for example, a Cambodian *bopha lockay* flower dance and a Mexican *folklorico* hat dance.

Collaboration burnout

The weariness in Kylin's eyes—indeed, in the eyes of almost everyone in the Pink Palace—underscores one of the center's biggest problems: burnout. The center's goal is not to lose one child, so it buzzes from early morning till deep into the night. Since everyone calls on everyone else for help, nobody gets much rest.

"I don't have enough time to help with all the translations at the clinic, because I'm also involved in written translation, teacher training, plus three schools," Kylin says. "I don't have enough help. I'm only one person running around."

Still, some agency heads, tired as they might be, insist they save energy by collaborating. "It stands to reason we should work together," says Eulalio Galindo, who runs Si Se Puede, which links college-age counselors to children. "I don't need to worry about 15 things; I only need to worry about four if somebody else picks up the rest."



The spirit of collaboration has spread beyond the center, too. For example, Meadows Elementary Principal Lynne Hopkins has organized park district programs for her students. "Not too many years back it would not have come up to provide many things for children to do after school. Now it's just our natural thought process to look beyond our narrow responsibility of teaching reading and writing."

Operations are not as neat as the building itself, though. Administrators still struggle to coordinate services and still lack a planned case-history computer database, which would hold files on every family's contact with each agency. And despite Ballesteros' claim that "we solved confidentiality issues in

one meeting"—typically thorny because medical workers rarely feel comfortable sharing patients' information—the nurses say otherwise.

"We still have some problems with the offices communicating, with each person still working on their own problem," says language development coordinator Charles Parchment. "It's slowly coming through, but everybody has their turf that's narrowly protected. So far, it's not perfect, but I still believe in the concept."

Nonetheless, the district is light years ahead of most other places. School nurses and the medical center staff meet regularly to discuss common issues; one such meeting led to the treatment of a child with pyelonephritis

who "probably would have ended up in the emergency room without it," says McKinley school nurse Janet Muehl.

"A child comes to our attention through the clinic, and we find out there are many other health problems in the family," says special resources coordinator Dolores Weichenthal. "Even if they come in just with an injury, we are able to send kids to dental care and mental health facilities that they've never seen. And we might schedule them for special education or other education services with information we learn from the physical."

Every month, a judge comes in to conduct a truancy court; both school staff and the probation officer are right at hand. In some cases, the judge and

Curriculum Director Sandra Will have agreed to send the child to independent study, which also is located in the district center. "They would not take advantage of any of this if it wasn't here," Will says.

The Chicago Cluster Initiative and others here have discussed such multi-service centers, but generally they are presumed to be too costly to construct. In San Jose, the district sold its old administration building and used the

proceeds to buy the warehouse.

For this investment, the collaboration has generated savings. "If a child comes to enroll in your district needing immunization, and you send him out the door, he may not come back for 10 days," says district business chief Bill Glynn. "But having a health care center in the building, I get it done in one day. Those 10 days a child is in school, I get my state money for that student. That's money in my pocket."

And the payoff for kids can be powerful. "If you have children coming to school who are hungry, who are sick, who are from fragmented families, they're not going to be learning anyway," says Lolita Foster, a member of the Board of Education. "But if you're making sure through the truancy court that they get to school, and you remove the health impediments to education, you've made a tremendous contribution to their being lifetime learners." ■

California crisis fuels collaboration

When it comes to collaboration between governmental units, California lives up to its reputation as a trendsetter. From the farmland north of Sacramento down to San Diego Bay, government agencies in dozens of counties have built joint efforts to serve children; one even dates back to the early 1960s.

To a large extent, the state's collaboration movement has been fueled by a long-running funding crisis, which has forced governments to do more with less. Every year in recent memory, fewer dollars have been available for education and child services. Proposition 13, adopted by voters during the tax revolt of 1978, limits the amount of property taxes that can be collected for education. That same year, the Legislature passed the "Gann limit" restricting the amount of money state government can spend. Together, these limits force local governments to look for ways to spend their money more wisely.

In 1989, the Legislature passed a law allowing counties that set up interagency children's councils to apply for waivers of state regulations that inhibited cooperation. But no county has yet been granted such a waiver.

In 1991, when the state suffered its worst-ever financial crisis, Republican Gov. Pete Wilson and the Legislature trimmed the state bureaucracy by shift-

ing responsibility for billions of dollars worth of services from the state to counties, the primary unit of local government in California. For example, counties now run mental health and child welfare programs formerly run by the state; their funding streams now flow directly to counties. Wilson strongly urged local governments to adopt collaborations as a way of saving money.

More discretion, less money

"Counties now have more discretion, but I'm not sure whether that was for good or evil," says Susan Lubeck of the Urban Strategies Council, an Oakland-based non-profit group pushing collaboration. "They cut out the state as a middleperson, but the revenues have not met projections. As a dear departed county commissioner here used to say, 'The state likes to pass the buck, but the buck doesn't come with it.'"

At least 24 of California's 58 counties have some sort of panel of government agency heads; some include other partners. But in many cases the organization works much better on paper than in practice. So far, true collaboration success has eluded most California players. Here is a sample of efforts compiled by the council and California Tomorrow, a like-minded non-profit:

■ The Oakland Inter-Agency Project started three decades ago, bringing together the city manager, school superintendent, police chief and service agency heads. Though it helped inspire President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, an evaluation showed that few collaboration actions emerged. Oakland now has a new board of agency heads.

■ Fresno County's Fresno Tomorrow is a non-profit group uniting major public and private agencies. It has taken the lead in providing case management services to at-risk children.

■ San Diego's New Beginnings program has focused intense efforts from the schools, juvenile court, housing agency, community colleges and other agencies on one elementary school, placing a service center nearby.

■ The San Bernadino County Children's Network, just outside Los Angeles County, unites public sector agency heads into a children's services team. This was the model for the children's councils required in the 1989 law allowing waivers of regulations.

By the end of September, Gov. Wilson was expected to sign legislation that would be yet another step in the state's efforts toward collaboration. Under the bill, adjacent counties could pool their state funds earmarked for special purposes, if they had a collaborative plan to save money in the process.

"Collaboration is worth pursuing," Lubeck says. "In terms of being able to point to changes in the quality of life for large numbers of people, unfortunately we're not there yet. But we see it in pockets here and there, so we keep pursuing it." *Michael Selinker*

Urban Strategies Council (510) 893-2404
California Tomorrow (415) 441-7631

Elsewhere: New York City

New York investing millions in youth

by Dan Weissmann

Since the election of Mayor David Dinkins, New York City has doubled its efforts on behalf of youth. Consider these budget items, for example:

■ Beacons, which are community centers housed in schools, keep school buildings open as many as 20 hours a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year. There are 20 beacons now, and another 17 are due to open in the next few months.

■ YouthLine, a 24-hour toll-free hotline, refers young people to neighborhood services ranging from shelters to swimming pools or just provides a sympathetic ear for youths who need to talk to someone. All 80 of YouthLine's operators are young people trained as peer counselors.

■ The Neighborhood Youth Alliance distributes \$3 million in city money to neighborhood groups for programs run by young people. Kids in the 33 Alliance programs are paid stipends for their community service work, which range from running food and clothing drives to producing public service announcements for local TV.

■ Street Outreach, a program for kids who are so alienated that they wouldn't join a program, funds outreach workers from 16 community groups to develop relationships with kids on the streets. The city contributes \$2.5 million a year, and some of the outreach workers are young people themselves.

These programs and others all started in the last several years, since Dinkins appointed long-time youth worker Richard Murphy as the city's youth services commissioner, a post Chicago does not have.

"Richard Murphy is an excellent youth commissioner after more than 20 years of commissioners who ranged from blah to just plain awful," says Julie Glover, administrator of The Door,



In New York City, teens looking for help or just something to do know where to call.

a highly regarded, comprehensive drop-in center for young people.

For decades, New York City's Department of Youth Services was a political patronage dumping ground, and the staff often had little experience with—or even interest in—young people, youth workers say.

In contrast, Murphy came to the office after 17 years with the Harlem-based youth agency Rheedlen Centers—which led a trio of New York groups sponsoring youth volunteers for President Clinton's Summer of Service program this year.

"I think a lot of the programs coming out of the city now show what a great community organizer Richard Murphy was," says Evelyn Rivera, who runs a network of New York City youth-leadership organizations.

But Murphy's appointment is only half the explanation for New York's emergence as a leader in youth programming. The other half is the existence of a large number of community-based organizations that serve young people and work to develop their leadership abilities.

Rheedlen Centers, The Door, La Alianza Dominicana, El Puente, Manhattan Valley and Youth Force are just a few of the youth organizations that have sprung up over the last 20 years.

"Different organizations had worked to establish themselves at the community level," explains Rivera. "And when the city became more informed about what works, we were all ready. It was like: Money? Great! Now we can do our work more effectively."

Developing young leaders

Many of these groups, like Murphy's Department of Youth Services, view youth as community resources and see their job as helping young people become leaders. This approach to youth service generally is known as youth development. As a result, in New York, young people can be found organizing health fairs, registering voters, conducting AIDS-awareness campaigns and leading political demonstrations.

For example, in 1991 and again this year, youths affiliated with El Puente, a Brooklyn youth development and activist group, organized and publicized a health fair to get kids inoculated before school started. More than 100 children and parents turned out for this year's one-day event, which sought to make inoculations less scary by mixing them with a variety of fun activities. "The place was like a Disneyland-style playland," with areas for face painting, finger painting and watching cartoon videos, says Chief Executive Officer Luis Garden Acosta,

New York's youth development organizations have, indeed, produced leaders. Rivera, who runs the city's Youth Participation Network, spent her high-school years on a citywide youth council; Sandino Sanchez and Eddie Silverio, co-directors of a beacon center, are veterans of the Manhattan Valley program; Raul Ratcliffe, who directs the Neighborhood Youth Alliance, came out of the Manhattan Valley and Youth Force programs. All are in their early 20s. Most of the permanent staff at La Alianza Dominicana are under 30, and the executive director is a "graduate" of The Door.

Although many Chicago groups run programs for young people, few have comparable experience in developing young people as community resources.

The youth-development approach is based on the belief that any community can find productive things for young people to do and, thus, keep them out of trouble. With a \$10 million price tag, beacon centers are the most heavily funded example of the city's commitment to this belief. In fact, the city literally chose to fund the centers instead of building prisons.

Beacon money comes out of a special tax levy for an anti-crime initiative officially titled Safe Streets, Safe Cities but better known as Cops and Kids.

The program, passed in 1991 by the state's General Assembly, mainly pays for extra cops. But the program's designers got some dollars earmarked for beacons after showing that neighborhoods with the most crimes often had "virtually nothing for young people to do," says Michelle Cahill, director of the Youth Development Institute, which gives technical assistance to beacon centers.

At the last minute, the state slashed the Cops and Kids budget, forcing Mayor Dinkins to choose between opening the centers and building a pair of prison barges. He went with the beacons.

New view of 'at risk'

Cahill's dream for the beacon centers is to "blend funding streams" that flow toward kids. Generally, governments dispense money for separate programs serving kids designated as "at risk": at risk of dropping out of school, of joining gangs, of becoming pregnant as a teenager, of contracting a sexually transmitted disease, of being put in foster care and so on.

The theory behind this approach is that individuals carry around sets of risks, says Cahill. But it's "the environment that is risky," she says.

Placing the beacon centers in school buildings is part of a new strategy to change that environment. "Families used to go get these services at some office someplace, and those resources rarely included any cultural or recreational programs," says Cahill. "Now, in addition to, say, substance-abuse counseling for children, the kids are involved in the beacon center, where they can get involved with groups of peers who are functioning very well. So kids can build on their strengths there instead of just being seen as the embodiment of their problems."

The Door breaks down walls between programs

The Door, one of New York's oldest youth-development organizations, is the ultimate in one-stop youth support.

Housed in its own building in the SoHo section of Manhattan, it offers a full-service health clinic, a large counseling staff, a job center, an on-site alternative high school, English-as-a-second-language classes, General Educational Development classes, arts studios with artists in residence, a gym and weight room, leadership programs, homework help and more.

About 6,000 kids "pass through" The Door every year, estimates Executive Director Bob Howitt. On top of the 150 students at the alternative school, some 200 to 250 drop by on any given evening, and a core of about 50 "regulars" come every night.

But The Door is not an easy program to copy. "In a way, this program is kind of a dinosaur," says administrator Julie Glover. "It's a luxury to be able to do this kind of administrative integration."

Precisely, it's a \$6-million-a-year luxury.

"This is a high-cost model," Howitt acknowledges. "We staff to accommodate anyone who walks in The Door, with whatever package of positives and negatives those people bring with them. So one program might be bursting at the seams with kids, and another one right next to it might be empty."

More than half of The Door's income is from government grants; Medicaid reimbursements for medical service and rent from tenant organizations add almost another \$1 million. That leaves more than \$2 million to be

raised privately every year.

When The Door opened in 1972, it ran solely on volunteer power. "When we got an offer of some money—after two years of operating without a dime—we debated for about two weeks over whether to take it," recalls Glover.

Even now, The Door doesn't take money indiscriminately. "We sent money back to the city's Bureau of Alcoholism," says Glover. "They wanted us to have a separate entrance for their program, a completely separate staff which was to have nothing to do with the rest of The Door staff."

Those conditions were unacceptable, says Glover, because they would undermine The Door's basic approach, which is to make its full range of services and resources available, on request, to all the kids who use the center.

Kids who might not cross the street for a substance-abuse program come to The Door from all over New York, often seeking the center's arts and recreational programs. Once kids are part of The Door, the staff get to know them and steer them to other programs they might need.

"About half of the kids enter the program looking for things other than what they really need to be focusing on," says Glover. "If they're 13 years old, they're not just going to come here and take their cod liver oil. So you feed the immediate gratification."

"It's a very sneaky model," notes Glover. "The kid comes to play basketball, and the staff's point of view is, 'Heh, heh, heh. . . . We're going to get you in here to the health program.'"

Dan Weissmann

"It's not a new idea, keeping schools open late [as community centers]," says Commissioner Murphy. "But I think this is the biggest commitment to the idea on the part of a city government—ever."

Murphy thinks the program will stick even if Dinkins loses his tough reelection bid this fall; enough city council members have a beacon in their district that the council probably won't vote them out of existence, he says.

But the state Legislature may be

another story, warns Sandino Sanchez, director of La Plaza, a beacon housed in a Manhattan high school that enrolls 3,000 students but graduated just 127 last year.

"We went to Albany to talk to Republican legislators," Sanchez recalls. "They said, 'We don't like the beacons program. We think it's a waste of money. We don't think it works.' Okay, well what works then? They don't have any ideas of their own." ■

Two beacon centers: 1 sizzles, 1 struggles



RICKY FLORES

Kids from a beacon program at Patrick Daly School in Brooklyn look up from a community garden, planted in memory of the school's late principal, who was killed by drug-related crossfire nearby.

by Dan Weissmann

Red Hook, home to New York's second-largest public housing project, is tucked between an expressway and the Brooklyn waterfront. About 70 percent of its residents live in The Red Hook Homes; roughly half the tenants are black and half are Latino. A lone bus route passes through Red Hook along Van Brundt Street, which on a mid-June afternoon is all but deserted.

Washington Heights sits at the northern tip of Manhattan, flanked by bridges to New Jersey and the Bronx. Dominican immigrants have been piling into Washington Heights for over 15 years, making it the city's most crowded area; 90 percent of the country's Dominican immigrants come through this neighborhood. Here, the sidewalks are packed with people and with merchandise ranging from fresh-peeled oranges to home-made tapes.

In Red Hook, violence is often in the

air, but the 1992 murder of Patrick Daly, principal of Public School 15, shocked even longtime residents. Daly had gone into the projects to find a missing student—he often escorted children home—and walked into crossfire between battling drug dealers.

Violence usually takes a back seat to drugs as the No. 1 problem in Washington Heights, whose central location and easy expressway access have made it the city's drug-dealing capital. Buyers swoop in and out with ease. But the death of a young Dominican man named Jose Garcia at the hands of a police officer in July 1992 sparked several days of sometimes violent protest.

These are the kind of places New York's city government had in mind when it appropriated \$10 million in 1991 to open 20 community centers in high-crime neighborhoods. Called beacons, the centers are housed in schools and run by community-based agencies.

Red Hook and Washington Heights were among the first communities to get beacon centers. Like their neigh-

borhoods, the beacons have evolved into strikingly different places. But the contrast has as much to do with the organizations that run them as it does with the communities that surround them.

RED HOOK The Red Hook Community Center is run by Good Shepherd Services, which has been around since 1947—before the Red Hook Homes were completed. Both Executive Director Jean Thomases and beacon Director JoEllen Lynch have worked in Red Hook and other Brooklyn communities for years. The beacon's staff is multiracial, but Thomases and Lynch are white and live outside the neighborhood. Thomases says that recruiting staff for beacon programs is difficult because the neighborhood is so hard to get to—and so dangerous.

Although Lynch is committed to working in Red Hook, she knows she will always be something of an outsider. This status makes her work that much more difficult, which is why, for instance, she was uneasy about telling a local Tae Kwon Do instructor he could not offer lessons in the center. Lynch had no choice but to say no because the instructor planned to charge fees, and city regulations prohibit charging fees for beacon activities. Nonetheless, Lynch worries that the incident may cost her a smidgen of precious credibility. "He's a community person," she says, "and he's been working around here for years."

LA PLAZA The beacon in Washington Heights, called La Plaza, is run by La Alianza Dominicana, a 10-year-old community action group. Like many staff members, its co-directors, Eddie Silverio and Sandino Sanchez, are Dominican and in their early 20s. Ysidoro Abreau, who teaches English as a second language to school kids in the morning and to adults in the evening, speaks for many when she says, "I do all this for Alianza because I'm trying to do something for my own community."

Being part of the community helps La Plaza staffers in a number of ways. For one, they enjoy a level of acceptance as they approach young people and families, and that acceptance seems to give them an edge in dealing with other institutions, such as the school, police and city government.

RED HOOK Providing programs for teenagers was Good Shepherd's main goal for its beacon, but the teens haven't come. The center has a successful after-

school program for elementary schoolers, but, as Director Lynch concedes, it hasn't attracted as many older teenagers, "who will just say, 'I don't want to be here unless there's open-gym basketball.'" Beacon staff and a community advisory board had agreed to focus on more structured activities, like job programs, academic tutoring and teen leadership councils, but that decision carried a price, says Lynch, "with most of the kids walking in the door and saying, 'Why aren't we just playing basketball? This place sucks.'"

LA PLAZA Attracting teens is less a problem for La Plaza. "My mother doesn't expect me home anymore," says 18-year-old Marisela Quintanilla. "She knows, every day after school, I'm here." Quintanilla and other "teen leaders" tutor younger children and get job training and college counseling as well as hang out.

As kids register for summer jobs, Silverio points with pride to a group of a dozen young men who have become youth-employment supervisors since coming to La Plaza, and there is a waiting list for a workshop in which kids learn to build top-line stereo speakers by taking lessons in basic electronics and acoustical engineering. Co-directors Sanchez and Silverio, says Quintanilla, are "like combination big-brother figures and father figures. It's like a family."

RED HOOK The violence in Red Hook is one obstacle to recruiting young people, especially young women, for evening programs, says Lynch.

"Often, a staff member literally has to call a parent and say, 'I'll vouch for her, I'll make sure she gets home safely.' And that takes a considerable piece of work." In a place where a well-known and well-liked man was killed in broad daylight on such a mission, it's understandable that Red Hook's staff might not be eager to volunteer for such work routinely.

"Violence and the threat of violence completely transform the work," says Good Shepherd Director Thomases. "Trying to make it a comfortable, safe environment without making it feel like a heavy police presence is very difficult."

LA PLAZA Violence seems a little less threatening in Washington Heights. Quintanilla says that although the neighborhood has become more dangerous in recent years, she and other kids feel safe enough walking home

together, down the right streets, even at nine or ten at night. And at La Plaza's request, drug dealers stay away from the streetcorners nearest Intermediate School 143, according to co-director Sanchez. This is quite a claim, since rights to a piece of drug-trading turf reportedly cost upwards of a million dollars. Sanchez coolly offers an explanation for the dealers' cooperation: "In this neighborhood, we all have something in common. We are all Dominican."

La Plaza also hired its own security force, 50 young people who use the

istration a menace. Several years ago, a dean was accused of sexually assaulting a student. But a new principal at the school gets high marks from Silverio for hiring 10 young, energetic teachers in the last year—six of them Latinos.

RED HOOK Shortage of money is a distressing fact of life at both beacons. The Red Hook center lost funding this year for a parent-involvement program, and the staff knows that it will be missed. "Parents in this neighborhood feel so left out," says Lynch.

LA PLAZA More than 1,500 kids participate in La Plaza's programs, but the cen-

"My mother doesn't expect me home anymore. She knows, every day after school, I'm here."

—Marisela Quintanilla

ter regularly. During the riots that followed the police shooting of Jose Garcia, La Alianza and other community groups formed a peacekeeping force, working with the city to try to keep protests non-violent and to track violence on both sides of the dispute. Silverio says that the center's relationship with the police precinct is good, listing some well-placed friends on the force. And Quintanilla, among other youths at La Plaza, was planning last June to take the upcoming police officer's exam.

RED HOOK The school gives Good Shepherd a bridge into the community. The center runs out of Public School 15, where the agency was drawn by Principal Daly, a strong believer in collaboration. Even Daly's memory draws the beacon staff and school community together; over 300 residents joined the staff one Saturday last May to plant a community garden dedicated to Daly's memory. In a corner of the garden, white flowers form a peace symbol.

LA PLAZA La Alianza makes itself a bridge into the school for the community. Alianza chose I. S. 143 partly because the school had the district's lowest test scores and "needed a lot of support," says La Plaza co-director Sanchez. Alianza staffers believed the school's older, mostly white faculty were out of touch, and considered the admin-

ter has only one counselor. "I put a Band-Aid on a lot of things around here," says Miosotis Muñoz. "That's what I tell my boss. I'm a Band-Aid person."

But La Plaza also serves young people by putting them to work. The center placed almost 1,000 teens in federally funded summer jobs this year, and 250 of them worked for La Plaza.

More impressive than the number of jobs is the nature of the work kids do. Fifty young people organized an immunization campaign that got 100 children inoculated in August. Another 30 spent the summer registering voters. Ten more ran an AIDS hotline and discussion groups. Another 10 became arts and crafts instructors at a local park; another 40 were day-camp counselors.

La Plaza also involves young people in political activity, occasionally fighting city hall and even the U.S. Senate. When Senate Republicans cut summer job funding this year, La Plaza led more than a hundred young people in a demonstration downtown, outside U.S. Sen. Alphonse D'Amato's hotel room.

For Silverio, the point is not just to keep kids busy or even just get them paid. "You've got to give them an experience that will be with them for the rest of their lives. Then the young person wins out twice." And when the experience serves the community, "then the community wins out three times." ■

New York resources

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
Fund for the City of New York
121 Sixth Ave., 6th floor
New York, NY 10013
Director, Michelle Cahill
(212) 925-6675

EL PUENTE DE WILLIAMSBURG
211 S. 4th St.
Brooklyn, NY 11211
Chief Executive Officer,
Luis Garden Acosta
(718) 387-0404

THE DOOR
121 Sixth Ave.
New York, NY 10013
Director of External Affairs
Julie Glover
(212) 941-9090, ext. 318

**YOUTH FORCE OF THE CITIZENS COMMITTEE
FOR NEW YORK CITY, INC.**
305 Seventh Ave. 15th floor
New York, NY 10001
Director, Kim McGillicuddy
(212) 989-0909

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH SERVICES
44 Court St., 10th floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201
Special Assistant to the Commissioner,
Jessica Mates
(718) 403-5211

NEW YORK CITY YOUTH PARTICIPATION NETWORK
44 Court St., 10th floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201
Director, Evelyn Rivera
(718) 403-5344

MANHATTAN VALLEY
Cathedral of St. John the Divine
1007 Amsterdam Ave.
New York, NY 10025
Deputy Director of Programs,
Edwin Scott
(212) 222-2111



At El Puente's inoculation drive, fun activities like face (and arm) painting came along with the shots.

RICKY FLORES

Elsewhere: New Jersey, Kentucky, Connecticut States help schools gather resources

by Dan Weissmann,
Carrie Skibba and Michael Selinker

The 1990s have seen many state governments enact programs encouraging collaboration centering on schools. Kentucky, New Jersey and Connecticut, for example, have invested millions of dollars in collaborative family and youth centers, many at more than \$100,000 apiece.

By comparison, Illinois has not made much of a commitment. Gov. Jim Edgar's Project SUCCESS pays to link schools and community institutions in collaborative partnerships. But though it reaches 74 schools in 39 areas statewide, total investment reaches only \$500,000, in one-time grants of up to \$15,000.

"For us to come into a community with a million dollars for two years and then give them nothing after that—what are they going to do in two years?" says Lori Williams, an Edgar spokeswoman. "We're asking them to change the system that's in place; if there's not enough resources then they will come back to the state. So far, no one has."

But states like Kentucky, where state resources have been far greater, decided that small investments in schools would be counterproductive, says Phillip Roeder, a University of Kentucky professor who researches such issues.

"I honestly wonder what good you could do with \$15,000," he says.

In fact, states like New Jersey and Connecticut see a number ten times that amount as more appropriate for each site. Roberta Knowlton, the director of New Jersey's program, says that larger sums attract a "critical mass of people who care about children."

And these states say one-stop shopping serves families better. "Someone comes in and says, 'I've got a 2-year-old who needs child care. I've got an 8-year-old who needs an after-school program.



TODD HULLIS

A volunteer gives an eye exam during the Jump Start for School Program in Louisville, Ky.

I've got a...'" says Paul Vivian, coordinator of Connecticut's family resource centers. "And all of that is here."

In New Jersey, the state encourages schools and nearby institutions to work together creatively by providing grants for locally designed youth service centers.

"The money becomes a carrot for all these people who care about kids and have never talked to each other to get together," explains Knowlton. "People had to come together just to write the proposals."

Similarly, Kentucky and Connecticut offer competitive grants to schools that design family resource centers or, in Kentucky, youth service centers that tap a variety of local resources.

Summing up the philosophy of all three states, Ronnie Dunn of Kentucky's Cabinet for Human Resources says communities "know what their needs are a lot better" than state bureaucrats do.

The states also figure that local coordination will make their own dollars stretch farther. "We want to provide services with as little new money as possible," says Vivian.

Mom who hated school now can't stay away

Donna Sisco, a mother of three in Louisville, Ky., never thought she'd be spending her days in school again, much less loving it.

Unpleasant memories of her own school days kept Sisco distant from her children's schools. But now, as a volunteer at the family resource center housed in her children's school, she has become a daily presence.

The center, she says, "has given me a feeling of self-worth, and I know it has for other parents too. And my kids notice that I feel better about myself. They think, 'Mom's important, and she cares.'"

Sisco recruits and coordinates other parent volunteers for the Watson Lane Family Resource Center and pitches in to help do what needs to be done each day. When she started, few parents were involved, but now, "People hear about good experiences through word of mouth," she explains.

The center's main activities are finding or providing day care, parent support groups, health and safety education and preparation for the GED (General Educational Development)

exam. The center also conducts parent outings, such as an afternoon cruise on a Louisville riverboat, which aim to increase communication among parents while introducing them to the center.

"Our purpose is to empower the family so it as a whole can feel good about itself," says center coordinator Terri Beeler.

The first step in empowering those families is to uncover the causes of children's problems in school. "Maybe it's not that the kids can't do their homework or whatever," explains Beeler. "Maybe the electricity's been cut off to their house, or the parents have been fighting."

Understanding a school and its community is a coordinator's biggest challenge, according to Karen Smiley, coordinator of the family resource center at Hazelwood Elementary School, also in Louisville.

Indeed, conducting a needs assessment is, by law, a coordinator's first task. Then, the coordinator and the center's advisory council have wide latitude to

design programs to meet those needs.

"No one has ever quite done this before, and we were encouraged to think creatively about meeting community needs," enthuses Smiley.

Coordinators also need to be creative about stretching their state grants, typically through collaboration with local service agencies that provide free or reduced price assistance.

At Hazelwood, Smiley has formed a partnership with the local YMCA to design summer youth programs. A visiting nurse association and the local public health office offer immunizations at the center. And community groups conduct a variety of activities, ranging from self-help workshops to rap performances.

Carla Tyree Curry, who oversees the 37 centers in Jefferson County (the Louisville area), stresses the value of service coordination, especially in areas with many resources. "Sometimes people just don't know where to go," she notes. "And school is the logical place to contact children and families."

Carrie Skibba

Indeed, tight economies have forced all three states to scale back their original center funding plans. All three also believe that competitive grants promote better use of their dollars.

"One of the reasons this has been so successful is there was a carefully thought-out plan to implement centers in stages," says Roeder of Kentucky's program. "And it started with a competition for money, which ensured that schools getting centers were most enthusiastic and ready."

The following are key elements of each state's program.

New Jersey

SERVICES: Each youth service center provides health care, mental health and family counseling, job and employment training, substance-abuse counseling, and information and referral. Some also provide teen parenting education, transportation, day care, tutoring, family planning and hotlines.

The big draw, however, is recreational activities. Knowlton points out that their presence makes it easier for students to seek out social services. "No one knows if you're there for rape crisis counseling or for a volleyball game," she says.

TARGET: Public high school students, with an emphasis on areas with high concentrations of especially needy kids.

LOCATION: In or near schools.

HOURS: Before, during and after school, and during the summer. Some are open on weekends.

GOVERNANCE: Three administrators in the state's Department of Human Services oversee the programs; some sites are managed through the school, and some through other local groups, ranging from medical schools to an urban league.

MONEY: Funding is through competitive grants. The state covers 75 percent of costs, up to \$240,000 per center. Local agencies contribute the remaining 25 percent either through in-kind services (e.g., a school offers rent-free

space) or contributions; some local governments or agencies contribute more on their own, and some manage to attract outside funding. Last year, the state spent \$6.66 million, or an average of \$230,000 per center.

NUMBERS: The state opened 29 centers in 1988—at least one in every county. 42 centers, some locally funded, now operate in 30 of New Jersey's more than 500 school districts. The centers did escape the budget axe even during the state's recent fiscal crisis.

Kentucky

SERVICES: The Kentucky Education Reform Act does not specify what types of service youth and family service centers must provide, giving coordinators great flexibility in designing programs.

TARGET: Youth service centers target junior and senior high school students. Family resource centers target families who have children in pre-school programs and elementary school.

Youth center succeeds where school hasn't

Last fall, there was a student at Essex County Vocational-Technical High School in Newark, N.J., who was so unsure of himself he couldn't look an adult in the face.

"We called in the school psychologist and the school social worker, but they couldn't do anything," recalls Vice Principal Emmanuel Addo. "Then we called in TNT, and suddenly this kid who'd never said anything to anybody just opened up."

TNT, short for Teens Networking for Tomorrow, is what students and teachers call the state-sponsored youth service center housed at Essex Vo-Tech. For many of the school's 700 students, TNT is family.

"TNT is what kept me in school, because I was on the edge a couple of times," says 11th-grader Felicia Saunders. "There were some times when I just wasn't going to school. And TNT basically tracked me down and said, 'You have to come to school.' They helped me see things correctly."

"TNT gives me something to look forward to," she adds.

"It's like a place where kids can go to talk about their problems and where kids come together—to have a good time and be serious," says ninth-grader Phillip Blount. "It's truthful. They tell you something, they mean it."

TNT, which features student-planned forums and activities, job placement and counseling, grew out of a family planning and teen leadership program sponsored for many years by a nearby state medical school. A state youth service center grant (\$215,000) and a state-administered federal grant (\$72,000) enabled that one-person operation to grow into a staff that includes five full-time workers, including a psychologist and a counselor, and two part-time workers.

Last year, the program added a recreation center. Now, each day, about 100 of the school's 700 students drop by during lunch and after school to play ping pong, table hockey and other games.

"A lot of kids come to us for the recreational activities, and we develop relationships with them," says Mary Ellen Mess, who ran the original teen leadership program and now directs the center. "Then we find out what's really going on in their lives."

TNT has been so effective in helping students cope with their problems that Essex lets them leave class to talk to TNT staff. Vice Principal Addo, says one result is a decrease in the number of students who threaten to kill themselves in the building. In the past, four or five students would talk seriously of suicide each year, he says; last year,

there was only one.

"It's like having DYFS [Department of Youth and Family Services] in the building, only so much better," says Addo. "DYFS would just say, 'Well, we'll place the kid in a foster home.' Doesn't work. The staff at TNT just do whatever's necessary. Now, when we know a student has a problem, we just handle things in-house."

About 100 students attend weekly meetings, organizing events like family forums. Last fall, for instance, students organized a pre-presidential election debate between parents and teens on "the real issues": telephone use, dating, family communication and sibling rivalry.

"It's like we've created our own gang," says Mess, "only it's all focused on positive stuff."

If the TNT staff are able to get farther than school staff, Mess credits several factors. "Part of it is that we are in some ways separate from the school," she says. "Kids call us by our first names, and we see the kids in a slightly different context: I don't see 25 of them every day, with an obligation to cover a specific amount of material.

"And I have to credit my staff," she says. "Kids know who cares and who doesn't. They're very good about picking that up." *Dan Weissmann*

LOCATION: In or near schools.

HOURS: Varies, depending on the center. Some are open year-round or have extended after-school and weekend hours; others are open only on weekdays or during school hours.

GOVERNANCE: A 16-member Inter-agency Task Force, including representatives of schools, service agencies and state human resources and education offices, oversees the centers. The human resources office handles administration, monitoring and technical assistance. Locally, each school or group of sponsoring schools selects a coordinator for its center; each has an advisory council composed of parents, community members and school personnel.

MONEY: Funding is through competitive grants. Schools can apply if at least 20 percent of their students are eligible

for free or reduced-price lunch. The state provides \$200 per low-income student up to a maximum of \$90,000. This year's total is about \$26 million.

NUMBERS: In 1991-92, the first year of the program, 133 centers opened. This school year, 373 are in operation, serving 638 school communities, or about 58 percent of eligible schools.

Connecticut

SERVICES: Child care, support and training for home daycare providers, parent education and support services and teen pregnancy prevention.

TARGET: All families, regardless of income. "If you live within the service area, you qualify. Period," says Vivian. However, a sliding fee scale is imposed

for daycare and summer day camp; the scale goes down to zero.

LOCATION: In or near schools.

HOURS: A minimum of 11 hours a day, five days a week, year-round.

GOVERNANCE: A single state administrator monitors the program; each local site has a program director.

MONEY: Initially, the state provided \$167,000 for each center, but a budget crisis has cut state support. Each of the three original centers gets \$133,000; four more get \$78,750; and one gets \$40,000 and a foundation grant.

NUMBERS: Three centers opened in 1989, five more in 1990. The state planned to add three to five centers a year but hasn't because of the budget crisis. ■

Carrie Skibba is a former CATALYST intern.

Graduated income tax good for schools, taxpayers

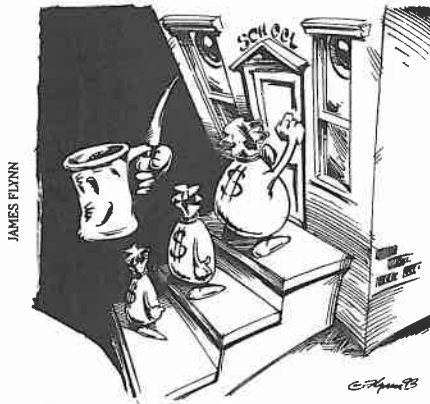
by Edna Pardo

Last November, 57 percent of Illinois voters voted for a proposed change in the Education Article of the Illinois Constitution that they knew would cost more money. From that, it should have been clear to political leaders in Illinois that it is time to straighten out the way we pay for schools, and that means straightening out how we pay taxes. To bring Illinois into the new global economy, we need a graduated income tax.

Taxpayers' loudest complaints are against the property tax. Statewide, local property taxes total about \$10 billion, as much as the state income tax and state sales tax combined. The largest share of local property taxes (\$6 billion statewide) goes to schools. You can see that on your local property tax bill.

Property taxes account for 64 percent of schools' budgets statewide, while state revenues account for only 33 percent, a figure that puts Illinois in 43rd place in state support for elementary and secondary education.

The reason given for relying so heavily on property taxes for school funding is "local control and accountability." But because school districts have widely varying tax bases, the result is a very inequitable and inadequate funding system. Under standards adopted by the legislative Task Force on



School Finance, 80 percent of Illinois children are in schools that are underfunded. Making school funding equitable and adequate for all children would require an additional \$1.5 billion in revenue; currently, the state appropriates \$2.1 billion and school districts raise \$4.2 billion in property taxes.

Illinois can easily afford to pay for good schools for all its children. The state ranks 11th in per capita personal income. In 1991, Illinois had more than 6,000 millionaires, with a combined reported income of over \$20 billion. And they pay state income taxes at the same rate, 3 percent, as the rest of us; they probably end up paying proportionately less because of deductions, in part for local property taxes.

More than 60 years ago, during the Great Depression, Illinois' political leaders tried to adopt a graduated income tax. At the time, a taxpayer "strike" and 20 percent unemployment had combined to render Chicago schools destitute.

Here's how the late Mary J. Herrick

described the situation in her book *The Chicago Schools: A Social and Political History*:

"The state contributed 6 percent of the school budget. The board owed \$134 million. Teachers' pay was slashed by 23 1/2 percent, and of the 80 pay days between 1930 and 1934 only eight were on time and seven were in tax warrants or worthless script. Businesses demanded severe cuts in curriculum and services as a price for buying tax warrants which they were able to use at full value in paying their taxes."

In 1931, the Legislature passed a graduated income tax and the governor signed it, but the courts declared it unconstitutional; subsequently, the Legislature adopted the sales tax.

The 1969-70 Illinois Constitutional Convention finally amended the Revenue Article to provide for an income tax, but it specified that it had to be "non-graduated" and that the ratio between the rate for corporations and the rate for individuals could be no more than 8 to 5.

The Legislature subsequently set a rate of 4 percent for corporations and 2.5 percent for individuals. Twenty-three years passed before legislators raised the rates, to 4.8 percent for corporations and 3 percent for individuals. These are among the lowest rates in the nation.

Illinois' sales tax rate, 6.75 percent, puts the state below average. But in Chicago, local sales taxes bring the total to 8.75 percent. People with limited incomes bear the brunt of the sales tax because they spend proportionately more of their incomes on necessary consumer goods.

Edna Pardo is a board member of the League of Women Voters of Chicago, with special responsibility for tax policy and school finance.

The richest 1 percent of Illinois taxpayers pay only 6 percent of their income in state and local taxes, while the poorest 20 percent pay 16.7 percent of their income. A graduated income-tax system could reduce taxes for residents with incomes below, say, \$85,000, raise them reasonably for residents with higher incomes and still net a substantial increase in revenues.

With a graduated income tax, property taxes could and should be reduced—

responsibly. Decades of unfair and inadequate taxes have created enormous needs in the areas of education, human services and economic development; those needs must be met.

Changing to a graduated income tax requires a constitutional amendment. The first step is getting three-fifths of the members of each house of the Legislature to vote to put a proposal on the ballot. Then 60 percent of citizens voting on the issue or a majority of all those voting in

the election must vote "yes."

It is hard to believe that fat-cat lobbyists and their political cronies could convince low- and middle-income taxpayers to oppose a graduated income tax.

A graduated income tax is the fairest of the tax options. Legislators and political leaders have to hear this from all of us—parents, teachers, citizens at large who do not want to go through *deja vu* all over again with the Chicago public school budget. ■

Letters

Article on Orr School Network shortchanged Orr High, new principal

The CATALYST article on the Orr School Network in the September issue raises questions about Orr High School's present role, and whether it is turning away from the community or from the 12 elementary schools in its new focus on academics.

As the co-chairs of the Orr School Network, we wish to assure everyone that Orr High School is a strong and active partner in the Orr School Network and that its principal is serving in the leadership of both the Network and the West Humboldt Park Family and Community Development Council.

The article reflects the early transition and get-acquainted period that necessarily accompanies any change in leadership, but, partly due to timing, it is incomplete. Some former programs at the high school have now been replaced by new ones. For example, a portion of the forthcoming science program, developed under the new principal, will link high school and elementary teachers together for staff development, the first real academic link between the two since the inception of the Network.

As for the community, Orr's principal and coach have recently initiated a joint program with the Boys & Girls Club to offer combined sports and academics to Network elementary students, complete with grade requirements.

The Orr School Network elementary principals are frankly very enthusiastic and appreciative that the high school is addressing academic issues in a comprehensive way, matching their own emphasis on the classroom.

We have welcomed new principals to our group every year, due to retirements and other changes, and 1993-94 will be no exception. The process does work, however, given a little time, and we are looking forward to another productive year.

*John C. Mazurek, principal
Casals Elementary School*

*Thomas J. Stewart, principal
Brian Piccolo Middle School*

Until I read the article, "Orr network keeps expanding while Orr turns inward," I had a great deal of respect for your publication. The number of innuendos and untruths printed in this article leads me to believe CATALYST is not concerned with promoting school reform in Chicago or education in general.

This article, with its unsubstantiated statements from persons who are no longer a part of the school, will have a negative impact on its constituents. It will take a great deal of time and effort to rebuild what the reporter has torn down.

Though I will not refute each untruth point by point, I will cite one specific example. The school received no funds from the MacArthur Foundation during the 1992-93 school year. The program that was previously funded by MacArthur was continued using state Chapter 1 funds after the foundation withdrew its support.

When I arrived at the school, I found the program mired in controversy and improprieties. Subsequently, I decided that the

funds were better utilized for more direct student benefits.

I have the support of the local school council, staff members, students and parents, as well as my superiors at the district and central offices. I invite you or the author to visit Orr Community Academy High School in order to see first hand what's happening at the school.

*Cynthia Felton, principal
Orr Community Academy High School*

Editor's note: If you had agreed to be interviewed, we could have published your account of the closing of the Lighthouse program, which is not inconsistent with the account given to us by the MacArthur Foundation. Certainly, though, your letter makes the picture somewhat clearer.

When your reporter focused on the two principals at Orr High School in "Orr network keeps expanding while Orr turns inward", the results missed the mark.

The fact of the matter is that Orr School Network has benefited greatly from both principals, and has been fortunate that these two individuals have served in the sequence in which they did.

The former principal is valued for his outreach into the community and his vision, when that was most needed to help us get started, and the current principal is equally valued for her clear-cut emphasis on staff development and curriculum improvement—and her willingness to extend that to the elementary schools, for which staff development is the most important educational strategy.

From the bank's point of view, the high school is continuing to play its valuable role in the Network.

*Nancy Brandt
Manager of Educational Programs
Continental Bank*

LETTERS continue on page 26

New high-school scheduling scraps study halls, shortens labs

By Linda Lenz

Almost seven years ago, a place called Room 185 grabbed headlines in Chicago.

A researcher for the Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finance found that many students were assigned to Room 185 at the high school he was studying, but he couldn't find the room itself.

As it turned out, the room was "a computer scheduler's fiction," used to signal students scheduled for a study hall the first or last period of the day that they didn't have to show up.

The charade dramatized the extent to which high school students were padding their course schedules with study halls in order to meet the state requirement of 300 minutes of daily instruction. (Study halls are counted as instruction.) Many students had two study halls, and some even had three.

Now, study halls are being swept out of students' schedules as the school system abandons 40-minute periods in favor of 50-minute periods, under a tentative agreement between the School Board and the Chicago Teachers Union.

Under 40-minute periods, students needed seven classes, plus homeroom, to meet the 300-minute requirement.

LSC elections

Local school council elections, scheduled for Oct. 14, will be delayed. As CATALYST went to press, the new date was Oct. 21; that was subject to change, depending on resolution of the financial crisis.

Under 50-minute periods, they need only six classes.

"Some of us have been advocating this particular solution since 1986," said Fred Hess, the Panel's executive director.

In the past, adopting this solution would have required teacher layoffs because scheduling students for fewer classes means schools don't need as many teachers. This year, however, more than 700 high school teachers took early retirement; thus, jobs could be cut through attrition, which was acceptable to the teachers union. In the process, the Board of Education saved money to help balance its budget.

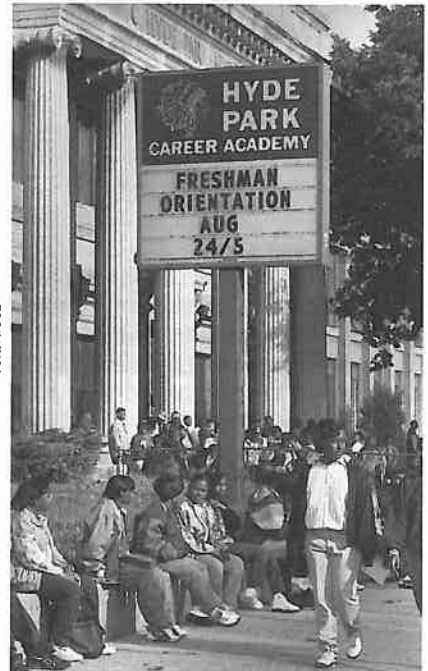
There is an educational downside, however. Previously, science and industrial education labs were scheduled for two periods, or 80 minutes; now they're scheduled for only one 50-minute period.

Similarly, at some schools, students in lower-level English courses had a two-period class twice or, in some cases, five days a week; that is, they had 280 to 400 minutes of English a week. Under the new scheduling, these students get only 50 minutes daily, or 250 minutes a week.

Since teachers still have to teach the same number of class periods each day, those that lost double-period courses have seen their student loads increase.

"Industrial arts teachers were the hardest hit," said Charles Vietzen, principal of Hubbard High School in West Lawn. "They used to have four groups of students, but now they have five." (The board also increased class sizes in high schools by two students, under protest from the teachers union.)

Also, band, chorus, computer science and other electives no longer fit



The school year finally starts, a week late.

within the regular school day for many students. To address this, Hubbard added a period at the beginning of the day (7 a.m.) and another at the end of the day (2 p.m.) to offer such classes for students willing to put in extra hours.

The problem is tougher for magnet schools, which sometimes draw students from great distances. "This school is no longer able to offer electives," said Powhatan Collins, principal of Whitney Young Magnet High School on the Near West Side. "We've seen the last of students who can take four years of sculpture, art, orchestra, dance and music. If things continue this way, a school like Whitney Young will no longer exist for students who want to excel."

The new scheduling also has drained off supervisory support. Teachers still teach five periods, meaning that they're in classes 250 minutes a day instead of 200. That means, in turn, that they have less time for such duties as hall guard and lunchroom supervisor.

See **SCHEDULING** page 26

Morgan Park discrimination ruling affirms LSC hiring power

by Michael Klonsky

A U.S. Appellate Court panel has ruled in favor of four black local school council members at Morgan Park High School who had been accused of racial discrimination for not retaining a white principal.

The decision could pull the rug out from under some 20 other discrimination suits filed by former white principals against minority LSC members, a lawyer for the Morgan Park LSC members maintained.

And it lifts a weight from all LSCs as they decide whether to renew the contracts of their current principals, school reform activists said.

The Appellate panel said there was no evidence to support the guilty verdict rendered last year by a jury. It went on to say, "By putting the power to hire and fire principals in the hands of non-professionals, the Legislature must have realized that local councils would make changes for changes' sake as a way of exerting their newfound authority, even if there were not glaring deficiencies in a principal's leadership."

However, the case has not yet ended. The attorney for former Morgan Park Principal Walter Pilditch says he will seek a rehearing in District Court, where a predominantly white jury earlier ruled in favor of his client, who is now principal of Curie High. Robert A. Berghoff, the attorney, argues that it's up to a jury, not Appellate Court judges, to interpret the intent of the defendants. "If we don't get a rehearing of the evidence, we can appeal to the [U.S.] Supreme Court," he said.

Meanwhile, Ron Samuels, attorney for the accused LSC members, was confident the Appellate Court decision would stick. He speculated that the prospect of huge court costs in what appears to be a losing cause "would most likely discourage further litigation" by Pilditch and other former principals.

"The Appellate Court's decision is a victory for school reform," said

Samuels. "It affirms the right of parents and community members to replace even a reasonably competent principal if they can replace him with a better one of their choosing, without apologies. The jury didn't believe that parents, especially black parents, could choose educational leaders, even though it is the parents who have the most at stake in such decisions."

Zarina O'Hagin, executive director of the Lawyers' School Reform Advisory Project, concurred. "At the end of their four-year contracts, principals have a right to nothing," she said. "I can understand why principals don't like that."

She cautioned that LSCs cannot base personnel decisions on an individual's race, national origin, age, sex, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status or physical or mental disability that is not related to the job.

No reference to race

While most of the mainstream school reform groups steered clear of the Morgan Park controversy, Bernie Noven of Parents United for Responsible Education was outspoken in support of the defendants. Noven hailed the decision as "gratifying," saying it would "discourage unscrupulous principals from harassing LSC members with false charges of racism and set a precedent for pending suits."

But Beverly Tunney, acting president of the Chicago Principals Association, still believes Pilditch and many other principals who lost their jobs when LSCs came into power were the victims of covert or overt reverse racism. "When you are dealing with LSCs, there are so many hidden agendas," she said. "It's not like it was when I first became a principal. You took a test and if you scored high on the test you were hired."

The principals association, which has staunchly opposed LSCs' power to hire and fire principals, is backing some of the other lawsuits.

James Schwartz, an attorney for most of the former principals who filed suits, declined to comment.

In his suit, Pilditch charged that he was the victim of discrimination because the LSC failed to specify its reasons for not retaining him and never formally evaluated his performance. At the time, 1990, the Reform Act did not require LSCs to state their reasons; now it does.

No one accused the defendants of making any overt references to Pilditch's race, said defense attorney Samuels. "The charges were based simply on the fact that the defendants were black, and the implication was that if black parents don't rehire a white principal, it must be because of race."

Berghoff, Pilditch's attorney, argued that a "smoking gun" wasn't necessary to prove discrimination. "People seldom admit that what they are doing is based upon discriminatory motive," he said. "What one has to look for—and the jury had to look for—is circumstantial evidence, and perhaps a little puff of smoke here and there."

In its opinion, the Appellate Court recounted some of the evidence presented at the trial.

■ Calvin Pearce, who abstained on the vote to retain Pilditch, "had a smile on his face" when he abstained.

■ Pearce, while touring the school's library, said that he felt the school needed a black male presence; the comment was made during a discussion about the paucity of black males in the teaching profession.

■ Shortly after the vote, defendant Willia Robinson let out what was described as a "whoop" and said, "We did it, girl!"

The judges did not discount the possibility that gestures and shifty glances "may reveal as much about a person's attitude as his verbal statements," but, "attributing discrimination to a council member merely because he may have

Chicago principals

	1989	1992
White	55.7%	44.2%
Black	36.5%	47.4%
Hispanic	7.6%	8.1%

Source: Chicago Public Schools

been smiling while voting (to abstain no less) is unwarranted.”

While Pilditch was generally well-regarded in the school community, the defendants testified that his weaknesses as a principal, not his race, prompted their votes. One defendant maintained that Pilditch failed to take action against white faculty members who allegedly made openly racist remarks in the school. Another testified that it was simply time for a change in leadership and that the school needed to be shaken up.

The Appellate Court panel found that these reasons were “apparently legitimate” and that Pilditch failed to prove he was fired because he was white.

The judges—Walter J. Cummings, Frank H. Easterbrook and Richard A. Posner—harshly criticized the prejudicial character of the earlier verdict against the defendants, writing: “The notion that all black decision-makers are driven by this single issue [race] rests on just the type of stereotype the civil rights laws were designed to prevent from infecting decisions; it would be painfully ironic if those same laws were here used to perpetuate such stereotypes.”

In U. S. District Court, the jury had awarded Pilditch \$62,000 in compensatory damages (for lost pay and pension credit) and assessed punitive judgments of \$1,000 to \$3,000 each against Pearce, Robinson and fellow LSC members Marty Gool and Fritz Barclay Jr. Pearce, the council chair, received the highest assessment even though he had abstained in the contract vote.

District Court Judge William T. Hart, who presided in the trial, later set aside the fines, ruling that the actions of the defendants were not “malicious,” “wanton” or motivated by “ill will”—as required to assess punitive damages. But Hart refused to set aside the jury’s verdict and even increased the compensatory damages to \$92,000.

Reacting to the reversal, Pilditch said he was “deeply hurt. . . . The jury sat for weeks and heard all the evidence in the case and decided overwhelmingly that it was a racist firing. Then these three judges meet for about 20 minutes and overruled everything that the jury did.”

A jubilant Calvin Pearce said, “It’s been three and a half years coming. However, I’m still stunned that this kind of action can be brought against an individual serving on a local school council.” ■



TONY GETSIC

Parents hold a candlelight vigil at Buckingham Fountain to press for a solution to the school financial crisis.

New contracts let schools stay open 'til 9 p.m.

Schools will be able to stay open until 9 p.m. on regular schooldays and until 10 p.m. on nights of local school council (LSC) meetings without overtime pay for maintenance staff, under new tentative contracts.

To accomplish this, principals will schedule engineers and custodial workers in shifts. However, schools with only one engineer may not schedule the engineer to work more than 10 hours of overtime a week. Principals will have to give two weeks notice before making significant schedule changes.

School reformers and principals had long sought such contract changes, to

cut back on the cost of much-needed after-school programs and to make school buildings more accessible to community groups and LSCs.

The contracts also make principals, not district supervising engineers, the first stop in the grievance process for engineers and custodial workers. However, reformers and principals lost their bid to give principals the power to hire and fire maintenance workers.

Tentative contracts also call for engineers and custodians to pay 2 percent of their base wages toward medical insurance premiums, or less if the Chicago Teachers Union agrees to less. The use of pension funds, the length of the contracts and any salary adjustments also would mirror CTU agreements.

Michael Klonsky

SCHEDULING

continued from page 23

At Hubbard, students assigned to study halls used to help out in the office and deliver messages; now that study halls are virtually gone, that help has disappeared, too.

“We’ll have to buy more teacher aides with our state Chapter 1 money,” said Vietzen.

“I’m opposed to it,” Vietzen said of the new set-up. “I don’t like the fact that I’ve lost 11 teachers and probably will lose 1 or 2 more. I would not be opposed to 50-minute periods if I had not lost teachers.”

At Lincoln Park High School, student reaction was mixed. “I wanted to take four years of chorus, and I don’t have it this year because of the new

schedule,” said Antonia Patterson, a sophomore who went from two study halls last year to one this year.

Joshua Miranda, a junior, said, “Study periods are like a break to relax. I don’t like classes straight, straight, straight.” But he conceded, “They’ve got you working more so you remember more. I think it’s better that they took them out, but I liked to goof off.”

Sonia Wahi, a junior in the International Baccalaureate program, was concerned that losing double periods in math and science would leave her less prepared for the stringent IB exams. “It’s ridiculous. It’s a bit too much pressure when you’re going all the way through school without any breaks. ■

Michael Klonsky and Molly Dunn contributed to this report.

Black school districts tax more, get less

Predominantly black elementary school districts in Cook County have higher property tax rates than the county's richest elementary districts, but still receive far less total revenue per pupil, according to a study by the Chicago Urban League.

In 1991-92, the average school tax rate in the black districts was 26 percent higher than the average for the richest districts, but the black districts received an average of \$4,000 per pupil less in revenue. The difference is largely because the black districts had lower property values.

The wealthy districts had an average operating revenue per pupil of \$7,333 and an average tax rate of \$2.11 per \$100 of equalized assessed valuation. The black districts, in contrast, had average operating revenue of \$3,259 per pupil, with a tax rate of \$2.67.

The League compared the 12 districts with the most black students and the 12 with the highest per-pupil spending, all of which are virtually all white; the data are presented in a brief filed to support a lawsuit that seeks to have the state's school funding system declared unconstitutional because it relies too heavily on local property taxes, resulting in wide disparities in spending.

Black children, the League argues, are hurt disproportionately because they are much more likely than whites to live in poor districts. *Lorraine Forte*

Newspaper uncovers error in teaching time study

A recent study of high school instructional time in 10 large districts inflated actual teaching time by an average of over 50 minutes, the Summer 1993 issue of *Substance* newspaper points out.

The study by the Hay Group stated that instructional time in the 10 cities averaged 299 minutes, 50 percent more than Chicago's 200 minutes. *Substance's* survey of eight of the 10 districts found that study halls and other non-teaching activities were included as "instructional time," inflating the average. Even so, actual teaching time in the eight districts was still higher than in Chicago, ranging from 225 to 275 minutes; the average was 242 minutes. *Lorraine Forte*

LETTERS

continued from page 22

Research group 'multipartisan,' welcomes scrutiny

We would like to respond directly to some of the critics' reactions (CATALYST, September 1993) to "A View from the Elementary Schools." In particular, questions were raised about possible bias in the report's perspective.

The main safeguard for objectivity in social research is the openness of the research process to outside scrutiny. Some critics seem to believe that the report was the handiwork of a small number of perhaps well-intentioned but nonetheless biased individuals. In fact, an extraordinarily inclusive process was used to formulate the report.

The basic concept for the study and the descriptions of school life were developed by synthesizing three independent field research projects conducted by the Chicago Panel on School Policy, the Center for School Improvement at the University of Chicago and the Consortium on Chicago School Research itself. Over 40 different researchers, more than half of whom were African American or Hispanic, spent time during the last three years talking with LSC members, principals, teachers and students about their efforts. The section of the report on the "Experiences of Actively Restructuring Schools," which was conducted directly by the Consortium itself, involved faculty from six different area institutions. In short, this is not the work of just the five primary authors or the 17 Steering Committee members who guided their efforts, but rather these are the collective observations of a very diverse group.

The study determined that adversarial politics was somewhat more prevalent in school communities with mixed minority populations. This finding was not a judgment made by the authors or the Steering Committee about which school communities appeared to be having more difficulty with reform; rather, it was based on tabulations of both teacher and principal survey reports about widespread conflict and distrust in their school communities. Here, too, others are welcome to examine these data. All survey data collected by the Consortium are available for analysis by other researchers. In our view, such an open research process is essential to maintaining a vital discourse about school improvement.

A number of specific criticisms were also raised about the important role of teachers in leading change, about student perspectives on school reform and, more generally, about the rationale for the specific questions we investigated. These are directly addressed in both the public report and the larger tech-

nical report, available from the Consortium. We encourage readers concerned about these issues to go beyond the CATALYST summary and read the full reports.

More generally, some of the critics' reactions to our report suggest a misunderstanding about our organization and how it conducts its studies. Almost four years ago, the Consortium came into existence at the specific request of the Chicago Public Schools system to bring together area researchers as an independent group to systematically examine the early implementation of reform, assess its progress and conduct research that would help inform school improvement efforts across the city.

The Consortium is a unique organization. Nothing comparable exists in any other major U.S. city. A broad cross-section of the city's universities and educational research institutions came together to create it, and they continue to participate in its work. By design, the Consortium is deliberately multipartisan, inviting the involvement of researchers from all over the Chicago area. The Steering Committee membership represents the diversity of institutions around the city that support research activities focused on school improvement.

Each Consortium project has engaged a number of advisory groups to guide its research and to react to its work-in-progress. In addition, we recently convened a civic advisory committee to provide regular consultation with community-based organizations, educational professionals, civic and political leaders. Al Bennett, dean of the Evelyn T. Stone College at Roosevelt University, chairs this group. We encourage anyone with concerns about issues that need more scrutiny to contact him.

The Consortium seeks to sustain more informed discussions across the city about efforts to improve Chicago's schools. Anonymous, unsubstantiated allegations of racial bias don't take us very far in this regard, although they are certainly understandable in the context of the long history of institutional racism in this city. We invite all who are actively involved in improving education in the city to contact us directly about our future efforts to advance these shared ends.

*Consortium on Chicago School Research
Steering Committee*

<i>Anthony Bryk</i>	<i>Jim Lewis</i>
<i>Penny Sebring</i>	<i>Rachel Lindsey</i>
<i>Albert Bennett</i>	<i>Bruce Marchiafava</i>
<i>John Easton</i>	<i>Don Moore</i>
<i>Mark Smylie</i>	<i>Jeri Nowakowski</i>
<i>Maxey Bacchus</i>	<i>William Pink</i>
<i>Larry Braskamp</i>	<i>Sylvia Puente</i>
<i>Janet Fredericks</i>	<i>Al Ramirez</i>
<i>John Kotsakis</i>	

Comings and goings

Thomas Hehir, who served from 1990 to 1992 as an associate superintendent for special education and support services, has been named director of special education programs for the U.S. Department of Education. . . Barbara Pulliam, the highly regarded principal of Harper High School, has resigned to become senior program associate at the Center for Creative Leadership, an international, non-profit research and leadership development institution in Greensboro, N.C. . . Gwendolyn Laroche, longtime education director of the Chicago Urban League, has resigned to become director of external affairs at the Chicago Park District. . . Former School Board Chief Attorney Patricia Whitten is back on the job temporarily following the forced resignation of Iris Sholder. Whitten, who left the board three years ago to join the firm of Seyfarth, Shaw, Fairweather & Geraldson, worked for the board for 16 years and was chief attorney for nine.

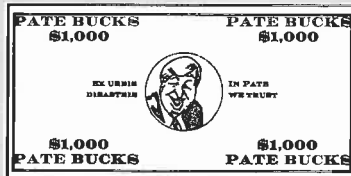
AWARD CONTENDERS Among the 12 finalists for Illinois Teacher of the Year are Adela Coronado-Greeley, a 3rd-grade teacher at Inter-American Magnet School in Lake View and a member of the Interim Board of Education in 1989-90; and Corla Wilson-Hawkins, a 7th- and 8th-grade teacher at Bethune Elementary School in East Garfield Park.

NEW PRINCIPALS The following have received four-year principal contracts, expiring in June 1997: Nancy Ellis, Guggenheim Elementary in Englewood, former Guggenheim teacher. . . Richard K. Richardson, Henderson Elementary in West Englewood, former interim principal. . . David A. Schlichting, Lane Tech High School, former assistant principal. . . Janis Todd, Lincoln Park High School, former principal of Byrd Community Academy on the Near North Side.

Sharon Rae Bender, Schurz High School, former interim principal. . . Doris M. Frentress, Sauganash Elementary in North Park, former interim principal. . . Beverly LaCoste-White, Kenwood Academy, former acting principal. . . Hal Meyer, Alcott Elementary in Lincoln Park, former Alcott teacher. . . Teretha J. Walton, Cather Elementary in East Garfield Park, former assistant principal.

Ethel James Collier, former principal of O'Keeffe Elementary in South Shore, takes over as principal of Burnside Scholastic Academy in Chatham on a two-year contract expiring in June 1995. . . Mary Ann Pollett, former teacher at Montefiore Special School, received a one-year principal contract at Montefiore, expiring in June 1994.

POTSHOTS AT PATE With its picnic in Wood Dale (home of State Senate President James "Pate" Philip), its \$1,000 "Pate Bucks" and its attempt to enroll Chicago children in Wood Dale schools, Parents United for Responsible Education (PURE) merits an award for satire. Holders of "Pate Bucks," a take-off on Philip's school voucher proposal and the corporate opposition to the Education Amendment, are urged to spend them "at the Wood Dale school, Walgreen's, Sears or casino of their choice."



EARLY RETIREMENTS 31 percent of eligible school employees (4,005 out of 12,800) took early retirement. Here is a breakdown:

Career service	1,370
Elementary teachers	1,353
High school teachers	785
Counseling personnel	118
Administrators	72
Principals	108

Another 199 employees on extended sick leave also opted to take early retirement.

RETIRING PRINCIPALS (Listed alphabetically by school): Abbott, Rebie Echols; Altgeld, Julian Kanner; Audubon, Juris Graudins; Avondale, Renetta Jarka; Beasley, Ollie McLemore; Bell, Leo Priebe; Blaine, Anne Coyne; Bond, Donald Prather; Brennemann, William Haran; Bryn Mawr, Joseph Lavizzo; Burley, Barbara Gordon; Burnside, Elaine Shannon; Cook County Jail, Barbara Williams; Chappell, Marsha Santelli; Cockrell CPS, Josephine Logan-Woods; Coles, Theresa Parker; Curtis, Walter Vinson; Davis Developmental, James Corcoran; Dawes, Joseph Bechina; Dunne, Early Nichols; Franklin, Alice Maresh; Garvey, Eleanor Temple; Graham Training, Ellen Jordan; Hamline, Walter Bjork; Harlan, Mary Robinson; Hawthorne, June Dudeck; Hedges, Paul Mandel; Herbert, William Rankin; Howland, Anita Broms; Jahn, Edwin Uhlig; Jenner, Doris Barnes; King, Dolores Eder; Kinzie, James Burke; Kipling, Marie Sloyan; Kozminski, Allen Travis; Lane, George Mazarakos; Libby, Matthew Bonds; Lindblom, Ethelynn St. James; Lloyd, Edward Paetsch; Lowell, Margoann Brown; Luella, James Bernero; Mann, Harold Whitfield; Marshall High, John Gibson; Mayo, Ida Cross; McNair,

Alfretta Holloway; Montefiore, Bernard Karlin; Monroe, Diane Farwick; Morgan Park, Earl Bryant; Morse, Robert Nesper; Mozart, Charlotte Projansky; Mt. Vernon, Benjamin Furman;

Nansen, William Moore; Near North, Bruce Troutman; Nixon, Elizabeth Evan; Northside, William Smith; Orozco, Mary Mikros; Pershing, Maude Lightfoot; Pirie, Gladys Ray; Pritzker, Gweneth Henslee; Prosser, Robert Bures; Raster, Earl Jeffrey; Reed, Richard Niedvares; Roosevelt, Jack Sherman; Ruggles, Ruth Robertson;

Scammon, William Whelan; Scanlan, LoEsther Foley; Sexton, Chaucy Bertha; Shoop, James Blackman; Skinner, Earnest Billups; Spalding, Jean Herron; Spalding Modular, Gwendolyn Boutte; Stevenson, James Cunningham; Suder, Brenda Daigre; Sullivan, Robert Brazil; Sumner, Donna Wilson-Williams; Swift, Seymour Miller; Tilton, Jesse Moore; Tonti, John Neary; Von Steuben, Joseph Catanzaro; Wells, David Peterson; Wentworth, John Jackson; Woodson North, William Taylor; Yates, Burton Hirsch.

TURNING SCHOOLS AROUND The recently created Chicago Schools Turnaround Commission has elected as its chair Michael Fahy, an attorney and LSC member at Lane Tech. Created by the Legislature in April, the commission is charged with recommending ways to improve Chicago schools; a report is due in January.

Other members are Delores Cross, president of Chicago State University; Edward R. Czadowski of the Coalition for HOPE (Help Our Public Schools Excel), which wants a paid, full-time School Board appointed by the mayor and governor; Francoise Friedman, a Chicago parent and school activist; Ronald Gibbs, a former LSC member; Joseph Kellman, owner of the Globe Group and founder of the Corporate-Community School in Lawndale; Stuart D. Kenney of Vedder, Price, Kaufman & Kammholz; former state Sen. William Marovitz; Diana Nelson, president of Leadership for Quality Education; and David Peterson, lobbyist for the CTU.

Also, Ronald Champagne, president of St. Xavier University; Janet Hudolin Gabin of the Chicago Neighborhood Organizing Project; John Gelsomino, principal of Kelly High; Coretta McFerren of WSCORP; Elaine Mosley, former principal of the Corporate-Community School; Supt. Jerry Petersen, Community High School District 218; David Reed, chair of the Harold Washington Party; and Frank Spula.

Lorraine Forte, Peggy Prendergast

Bright Ideas

Marshall Middle School students 'work' on vacations

Months before school let out for the summer, eighth-graders at Thurgood Marshall Middle School in the Irving Park neighborhood were busy planning dream vacations.

The planning was part of Travel Time!, a program initiated by teacher Theresa Speegle.

Speegle assigned groups of two to five students to research the history of a destination, develop a one-week vacation itinerary, prepare a budget and write a brochure to entice visitors. Many students constructed their brochures out of magazine ads for destinations such as Hawaii, Disney World and Paris. The groups also made written reports and oral presentations, which Speegle videotaped in the style of a cable television program called Travel Quest.

Speegle, a language arts teacher, created the program to help students with their skills in writing, research, math and geography.

The program inspired students whose class performance had been lackluster,



Eighth-grader Yvette Esparza drew this surfer to promote her dream vacation, a trip to Hawaii.

Speegle says. "With this project, I got a lot of work out of kids who hadn't done work before."

Students dove enthusiastically into the material and actually wanted to spend extra time working on their projects, she reports. Travel books became a "hot item" during class reading time,

Speegle notes. In addition, the class was eager to find out what the next project would be.

"We used our imaginations a lot," says Naomi Carrillo, who worked with a group planning a trip to Disney World. For example, classmate Yvette Esparza showed her creativity by videotaping her

fish tank to simulate the ocean.

Alicia Morales, who also worked to plan the trip to Disney World, says she enjoyed working with her classmates.

And Bernardo Rivera says that "the most enjoyable thing was learning [about] new cultures."

Speegle financed the project with a \$400 grant from the Chicago Foundation for Education, which she used to buy the videotapes and more than 50 travel books. She brought in her own travel magazines for the students to use as resources and went to local travel agencies to gather brochures on popular vacation spots. Speegle also encouraged her students to call toll-free 800 numbers to request information on their sites.

Speegle plans to repeat the program next year, but with an added twist: she'll probably ask students to work within a budget. "I think that may require a little more research and thinking skills, making choices on what's really important," she explains.

Fred Krol

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