

VOLUME V NUMBER 4 DECEMBER 1993

Catalyst

VOICES OF CHICAGO SCHOOL REFORM

New standards, same old tests on tap for spring

by Michael Klonsky

The Chicago Board of Education and the Chicago Teachers Union finally have agreed to something that will please the politicians, the business community and many school reformers—standards. The new set of teaching and learning standards, produced by a joint effort called the Chicago Learning Outcome Standards Project, is due to appear in schools this spring.

But reform advocates contend that unless a compatible form of assessment is tied to the standards, the prospects for raising student achievement are dim. Using the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills and, in high schools, the Tests of Achievement and Proficiency, will not do, they insist. More importantly, principals and teachers are wondering how new standards can be reached when financial hard times continue to undermine programs. "The timing is just bad" is the way one principal puts it.

See **UPDATES/STANDARDS** page 25

Faculty segregation

Since principals were given the power to hire teachers of their own choosing, the number of schools with segregated faculties has increased.

See story on page 7.



JOHN BOOZ

Teaching vacancies are not hard to fill for Chicago public schools. Karen Devine jumped from teaching at a Catholic school to Bowen High School, where she is a teacher intern in the Teachers for Chicago program. (See story on page 8.)

Teachers easy to find, hard to bring on board

by Lorraine Forte

HELP WANTED: 2,100 candidates to teach in Chicago, home of the nation's third-largest school system. Must be able to teach amidst crisis and willing to accept reassignment to any school on a moment's notice.

This fall, even with teacher cuts, the Chicago public schools had almost twice the typical number of teaching slots to fill because of early retirements. As school started, the Board of Education listed 2,094 teacher vacancies; typically, the figure would be about 1,000, according to the Office of Budget Development and Analysis.

Even so, and in spite of turmoil created by the financial crisis, principals say they have had little trouble finding

qualified candidates. Some schools have been inundated with applicants; for instance, Principal Terrence Murray of Haugan Elementary in Albany Park says he receives between two and 10 resumes daily and has "a stack one foot high." And the annual teacher fair held by the Board of Education drew over 2,000 prospective teachers each of the last two years, reports Margaret Harrigan, former associate superintendent for human resources.

Some principals had difficulty finding teachers for certain specialized positions, but the only systemwide shortage is in bilingual and special education.

But even with a plentiful supply of

See **TEACHERS** page 4

In This Issue: Uncertainty rocks schools

"If this is allowed to happen, then what happened to school reform?" asks an angry John Gelsomino, principal of Kelly High School. "I'm interviewing people, and then I'm telling them they don't have a job here after they've left another position to come here? Do we have local control or don't we? And if we don't, then let's stop the charade."

It was early November when Gelsomino was venting his spleen to *CATALYST*. Over the summer, he had recruited 14 teachers; then, in the fall, he had to "fire" them because their jobs were cut at the last minute to help balance the Board of Education's budget. By late November, Gelsomino was feeling better. Ten of the 14 teachers were returning to Kelly because the school's enrollment had increased and because the board had agreed to restore 100 teaching jobs in high schools.

But that doesn't diminish the torment that high schools and their students suffered earlier. As our lead story this month shows, the problem wasn't simply that staff had been cut, but that the cuts came too late for schools to plan their way around them.

To a large extent, the die was cast last January, when the board blocked inclusion of Chicago teachers in a bill offering school employees early retirement incentives. The board was all for early retirement but wanted something in return: relief from the law guaranteeing jobs for supernumerary teachers. The Chicago Teachers Union stood in the way of that and, in June, won unencumbered legislative support for early retirement. The application deadline was set for Aug. 15, only weeks before schools were scheduled to open.

The Legislature's action on early retirement set the stage for job cuts to be carried out through attrition. But it wasn't until mid-August that the teachers' union agreed to a specific plan: increasing class periods in high schools to 50 minutes, the effect of which was to reduce the number of periods taught each day and, thus, the

number of teachers needed. The board also increased class sizes for the first semester.

Then, contract and legislative negotiations dragged on, causing still more problems. One was that the board did not know how much state Chapter 1 money would be used to help plug its deficit; therefore, it delayed "loading" this year's increment into school budgets, barring schools from hiring people they had planned to hire.

You can hardly blame the prospective new teacher at Carson Elementary who, according to Principal Kathleen Mayer, "got a whiff of all this and said, 'I'm going to teach in the suburbs.'" Fortunately, that teacher is far outnumbered by new teachers who are willing to weather the storms of Chicago school politics, as our articles this month also show.

In light of this year's disastrous school opening, a little-noticed provision in the school borrowing package approved last month by the Legislature is cause for concern. It gives the School Finance Authority the power to adopt a "provisional budget" that would allow schools to open pending adoption of a final, balanced budget. People familiar with the provision and its history downplay it, saying the provision is simply language left over from earlier discussions about a temporary legislative reprieve from the balanced-budget requirement. But it's also an invitation for the unions and legislators to take more time to get what they want, leaving chaos in their wake.



WORTH PONDERING "Without stronger and more effective political leadership, the fiscal problems of Chicago's school system will never be settled. No final solution to these problems will be accomplished so long as suburban and downstate legislators continue to believe and live off misinformation and myths about what is going on in Chicago and in its school system. . . . The system taking place under the 1988 school reform statute is indeed beginning to work."

Laurence Howe, executive director, Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago, in the November/December issue of Chicago Enterprise.

Linda Berg Lorraine Forte

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PUBLISHER
Roy Larson

EDITOR
Linda Lenz

MANAGING EDITOR
Lorraine Forte

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Debra Williams

OFFICE STAFF
Regina Powell, manager
DiAnna N. Lebherz

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Michael Klonsky
Dan Weissmann

CONSULTING EDITOR
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Diane Hutchinson
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Catalyst

VOICES OF CHICAGO SCHOOL REFORM

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DECEMBER 1993

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1993 Peter Lisagor Award, Best Newsletter.
1993 Distinguished Achievement Award,
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candidates for regular classroom positions, hiring has been harrowing—because of the prolonged uncertainty and confusion stemming from a late start to the school year, protracted negotiations between the Board of Education and the Chicago Teachers Union and the Illinois Legislature's refusal to approve a funding package until faced with the threat of a third school-system shutdown.

Coping with chaos

In interviews with more than a dozen principals, *CATALYST* found a number of common problems, including schools that had to "fire" new teachers they had hired, roadblocks to putting new hires to work, elementary schools that got saddled with high school reserve teachers (formerly called supernumeraries) and reserve teachers being sent to jobs other people already held. Here's how several schools coped.

■ At Kelly High in Brighton Park, Principal John Gelsomino has been on a rollercoaster. Over the summer, he convinced 14 teachers to leave jobs to come to Kelly. Then, their jobs at Kelly were cut at the last minute to help balance the school system's budget; so Gelsomino switched gears, helping the 14 find still other jobs.

"If this is allowed to happen, then what happened to school reform?" he asks angrily. "I'm interviewing people, and then I'm telling them they don't have a job here after they've left another position to come here? Do we have local control or don't we? And if we don't, then let's stop the charade."

Gelsomino also helped find positions for three Kelly teachers whose positions were cut and who were not certified for any of the school's remaining slots. "The board said, 'Put them in *any* classroom.' Well, I'm not going to do that to a teacher who I respect," says Gelsomino.

Another reserve teacher—who taught vocal music for 26 years—was sent to Kelly to teach gym. "People were treated like cattle," Gelsomino says.

By mid-November, Gelsomino was feeling much better; 10 of his 14

recruits were on their way to Kelly because enrollment had increased and the board had agreed to restore 100 teachers to high schools.

■ At Terrell Elementary in Washington Park, Principal Reva Hairston chose several new teachers for special tutoring and enrichment programs, to be funded by state Chapter 1 and other discretionary money. However, central office held back on some state Chapter 1 money until the Legislature decided whether and how much of it would be used to plug the school system's deficit. As a result, in mid-November, Hairston had not yet brought the new teachers on board.

Meanwhile, the personnel office assigned three high school teachers with elementary certificates to vacant positions Hairston had not filled because the late start of school had postponed interviews. The teachers are fine, she says, except she's sure they'd rather be teaching high school students.

"There's a big difference between teaching different subjects [to the same kids] all day long, and teaching the same subject to different kids every 50 minutes," Hairston notes.

■ At Mitchell Elementary in West Town, Principal Deanna Rattner was still searching for a kindergarten teacher, a Spanish-bilingual computer teacher and a librarian. What Rattner *does* have is a new art teacher—who taught high school print shop classes for the past 37 years.

"He'd be a great printer if I needed my wedding cards done," Rattner says. "He's filed a grievance; I don't blame him."

"I enjoy working here, and I like the people, but I'm a fish out of water," says the teacher, Dan Zachary, who was sent from Kelvyn Park High on the Northwest Side. The central office reasoned that, since Zachary is certified in graphic arts, he could also teach *regular* art classes. Although the Board of Education agreed with the Chicago Teachers Union to restore some high school teaching positions, Zachary says he doesn't have much hope of returning to Kelvyn Park; most of the school's vocationed programs have been scuttled, and Zachary's former print shop was converted, he says, into a regular classroom.

■ At Albany Park Multicultural Academy, a middle school housed in Von Steuben Metro Science High School, Principal Mary Lee Lasher hired a new science teacher in July. By

mid-November, however, the personnel officer assigned to her district had not yet processed the required paperwork for new hires—so the new teacher couldn't get her full pay or health insurance, even though she was working.

Lasher also hired a half-time music teacher, sharing the teacher with LeMoyné Elementary in Lake View. However, personnel thought Albany Park still had a half-time music position open and repeatedly sent over a high school music teacher whose position had been cut. For weeks, Lasher tried to correct the error, completing new transfer forms and, finally, calling the district superintendent. The district office, however, kept sending the teacher back. "After a while, I stopped sending him back down to personnel," Lasher says. "I just said, 'Why don't you go home?'"

"This would make a great sitcom," Lasher says. "But in the end, I get what I want, and I have outstanding teach-

Great credentials don't count

Stephanie Fernald has a bachelor's degree in Spanish and a master's degree in education. She taught seven years in private schools and in Spain, and is fluent in Spanish. With a chronic shortage of bilingual teachers, the Chicago public school system would seem an easy place for her to land a job.

Indeed, finding a school that wanted to hire her wasn't a problem. But navigating the bureaucracy to get credentials *was*.

"I wanted to teach in the inner city, but the whole [application] process was so much more difficult" than in private schools, Fernald says. "It was so much harder to get in, even though there's a real need for bilingual teachers."

Fernald decided to return to teaching last March, after being laid off from a job with a parent education program. She sent out resumes to 35 principals she had come to know through the program. Then, armed with university transcripts, birth certificate and other documents, she went to the central office to apply for a teaching certificate and a substitute's card, which would allow her to begin working right away.

ers. I'll lie down in front of [Supt.] Argie Johnson's door if I have to, but I'm going to get what I want. My kids are going to get as good as what the suburban kids get because they're going to have to compete with the suburban kids."

■ At Gary Elementary in South Lawndale, a committee comprised of Principal Hugh LeVoy, local school council members and teachers reviewed resumes extensively and interviewed 15 candidates in anticipation of early retirements. Nine Gary teachers ended up taking early retirement. The new teachers have "shown a high level of commitment and blended with the school very well," LeVoy says. But like other principals, LeVoy hasn't been able to permanently assign the newcomers to their positions because the central office has been slow to process paperwork, he says.

Now, LeVoy is just one of many prin-

cipals worried that reserve teachers will bump the new teachers from their positions. "It's deflating for everyone," he says. "No one wants it."

Under the new contract and state law, the board must assign reserve teachers to vacant teaching positions that principals have not filled within 60 days. However, as *CATALYST* goes to press, the board had neither made clear when the 60 days began nor provided a list of reserve teachers, says Beverly Tunney, acting president of the Chicago Principals Association and principal of Healy Elementary in Bridgeport.

■ At Carson Elementary in Gage

Park, Principal Kathleen Mayer interviewed a candidate over the summer for the school's new prekindergarten program. Mayer wanted to hire her, but "She got a whiff of all this [confusion] and said, 'I'm going to teach in the suburbs.' Who are you going to find without a [teacher's] contract a week before school starts?" Through "serendipity," Mayer adds, she was able to hire a parochial school teacher for the position at the last minute.

The first school-system shutdown kept Carson faculty from holding the extra staff development days planned since last year and scheduled for the



Stephanie Fernald, a bilingual teacher at Peirce Elementary, made 15 trips to Pershing Road and elsewhere in order to obtain teaching credentials.

She also applied with the Illinois State Board of Education to take the test required to qualify for a special transitional bilingual certificate; with it, she would receive regular teacher's pay and have six years to become fully certified.

Meanwhile, seven principals called within two days; to date, she adds, "all of them have called me." She accepted a job at Jungman Elementary on the Lower West Side, filling in—at the substitute-teacher pay of \$10 an hour—for a teacher who had taken a three-month leave of absence.

In April, she received a letter from the state board stating that she didn't qualify for certification because her transcripts didn't specify any student teaching courses, and were otherwise "deficient" in credits; in fact, she had taken a student teaching course over one summer while studying for her master's at Harvard University. "The letter was very vague," Fernald says. "It didn't say which courses I would need, which would have helped."

The solution, a central office administrator finally told her after numerous calls and visits, was to have her Harvard professor write a letter stating that the summer course was, indeed, a student teaching course. Fernald made calls,

finally reaching her instructor, who agreed to write the letter.

At the same time, Fernald received another letter from the state board telling her she'd been put on the waiting list to take the test for the bilingual certificate, which is given only four times a year. She made several calls to find out her status on the list, Fernald says, but "never received callbacks. And you could only call between 9:30 and 11 [in the morning] to leave your message, and I couldn't keep calling because I had to be in the classroom." She missed two test dates, in April and June.

Finally, in July, she learned from a friend that a letter from her principal would put her near the front of the line to take the test.

Jungman's principal wrote the letter for her, and she finally took the test in August, receiving the bilingual certificate in September.

By that time, Fernald had taken a new job as a bilingual teacher at Peirce Elementary in Edgewater. She is earning a regular teacher's salary, but received credit for only two years of teaching experience, plus a master's degree. And because she lacked other credits, she didn't qualify for a regular teaching certificate.

"I'd love to continue teaching, but as someone who taught for seven years and has a master's degree, I don't know if I want to go through all that," Fernald says. "I do have experience, but not the way they want it."

Lorraine Forte

first few days before school was to start.

Lutaf Dhanidina, director of budget development and analysis, gives three reasons for delays in processing new hires: lack of personnel at central office, particularly in teacher personnel, where a number of employees took early retirement only weeks before school opened; the mountains of paperwork required to process early retirees; and the many new principals in the system, who aren't familiar with the forms and computer coding that must be completed for new hires, transfers and so forth.

"We end up talking to schools a lot," says Dhanidina, whose office assigns position numbers for newly hired teachers. "Previously, [our department] would send paperwork back to a school if it wasn't correctly coded, but I'm asking my staff not to do that, to pick up the phone, talk to a principal and try to fix it. That takes time."

Maurice Bullett, acting director of teacher personnel, did not return repeated *CATALYST* phone calls.

'Mad dash'

The new rule on assigning reserve teachers has "thrown us [principals] all for a loop," says Tunney.

Often, principals have hired young teachers as FTBs, or full-time-basis substitutes, giving them an opportunity to try out newcomers before making permanent assignments. However, FTBs can be bumped from their slots by reserve teachers because the board considers positions held by FTBs to be officially vacant.

That gives principals one of two choices: Take a chance and permanently assign a teacher who might not work out, or take the risk that someone worse will be assigned in their place. Many are opting for the first choice.

"Principals are making mad dashes to get people who are now FTBs [permanently] assigned," says Kathleen Mayer of Carson Elementary. "I guess people figure, better the devil you know than the devil you don't."

Also, if a former FTB does not work out, firing that person is not especially difficult, says Harold Zimmerman, principal of Murphy Elementary in Irving Park. It takes eight weeks—compared to three weeks for an FTB—and a number of classroom observations and con-

ferences. In the case of tenured teachers (those who have been in regular assignments for at least three years), formal remediation plans are drawn up; if the teacher doesn't improve, the principal must convince the School Board and then a state hearing officer that the teacher's conduct is "irremediable."

Principals are not opposed to hiring reserve teachers, says Tunney, "but we want to be able to pick them ourselves." Other principals say they aren't concerned because there are probably too few reserve teachers in the system to cause any substantial interference with hiring. (Typically, the number has ranged from 200 to 300.)

"I'll lie down in front of [Supt.] Argie Johnson's door if I have to, but I'm going to get what I want."

—Mary Lee Lasher, Albany Park Multicultural Academy

Further, observes Principal John West of Thorp Elementary in South Chicago, "A lot of people have misconceptions about supernumeraries. I was a supernumerary when I was a teacher in this system, and it made me a better teacher."

New blood

Meanwhile, principals are getting teachers from a variety of sources: other schools in the system, straight from college, the board's annual teacher fair, new teacher intern programs (see stories on pages 7 to 10) and Catholic schools, where pay averages a mere \$20,500 at the elementary level and \$23,000 at the high school level. (Average pay in the Chicago public schools is \$43,086.)

"I heard that public schools were so bad that I had to see for myself. Plus, I thought if they were that bad, I wanted to make a difference," says Karen Devine, a former teacher at St. Scholastica in Rogers Park, who now teaches English at Bowen High School in South Chicago through Teachers for Chicago. "When I started teaching, I found that the public schools are not as bad as people say they are. These are

just kids like all the others."

Some principals also have to battle the reputations of their neighborhoods. At Terrell, in the Robert Taylor Homes area, Hairston says she has had enough applicants, but "I don't have a cast of thousands. That may have to do with the area. People have preconceived notions of what the school is like [and] I tell them, look, don't worry about where we are, just come out here." (Hairston, however, is still looking for a special education teacher.)

Other schools in the area are in a similar boat even though they "run great schools" in terms of discipline, she says.

At Goldblatt Elementary in Garfield Park, Principal Lillian Nash echoes Hairston's comments. When she first arrived at Goldblatt four years ago, she had problems recruiting teachers to come to a West Side school. "Where we are, no one wanted to come. They just didn't give us a chance." She lost out on hiring a highly recommended librarian because the woman's husband came to the school and said "No way," Nash reports. Since then, the situation has improved because, like Hairston, "We said come, just see, it's not like what you think."

Both Terrell and Goldblatt have teacher interns from the Teachers for Chicago program. Terrell also has interns from DePaul University's Urban Teacher Corps. None of the interns seems daunted by the demands of teaching in poor neighborhoods, their principals say. "They bring something new—willingness, commitment, energy," says Hairston. "Many times I've had to put them out of the building at 4 p.m. They remind me of myself and my friends when we were young, just starting out in teaching." ■

Contributing editor Dan Weissmann and intern Molly Dunn contributed to this story.

Faculty segregation increases since reform

by Lorraine Forte

In 1988, the School Reform Act gave principals the power to hire teachers of their own choosing—subject to the Board of Education's federal desegregation consent decree, which requires each school to have a racially integrated faculty.

Since then, however, school faculties have become increasingly segregated, a *CATALYST* analysis of Board of Education data shows.

In 1987, 186 elementary schools and 30 high schools fell outside the racial guidelines outlined by the consent decree. By 1992, the last year for which data are available, the numbers rose to 299 elementary schools and 37 high schools.

Many of these schools are outside the guidelines by only a few percentage points, so that several new hires, transfers, early retirements or other personnel changes could bring a school into compliance with the decree. Still, the number of schools with highly segregated faculties also has increased. (See accompanying chart.)

The consent decree states that the percent of white and minority teachers in each school should mirror the percent of white and minority teachers systemwide, plus or minus 15 percentage points. Between 1987 and 1992, the teaching force remained steady at about 45 percent white and 55 percent minority, so each school faculty should have been 30 percent to 60 percent white and 40 percent to 70 percent minority.

Charles Curtis, a School Board member who heads the board's desegregation committee, says the board is "aware of the situation" and is considering issuing hiring guidelines that would not interfere with principals' hiring powers.

Some observers point to Chicago's racially segregated housing patterns as

the reason faculties are becoming more segregated. "Teachers are looking at working [near] where they live," says Beverly Tunney, principal of Healy Elementary in Bridgeport and acting president of the Chicago Principals Association. "Teachers are also concerned about safety and travel. That's driving the racial aspect [of hiring]."

A Far Northwest Side school might have "real difficulty" finding minority teachers, she says, while schools on the South Side might have few white applicants.

Principal Fred Kravarik of Marquette Elementary in Chicago Lawn describes the situation at his school: Five of the seven Marquette teachers who took early retirement this year were minorities, but only one minority applied to teach there; when Kravarik contacted her, she had already accepted another job. Now, Kravarik is concerned that the new, white teachers he hired may eventually be transferred from the school because of the racial guidelines.

Other observers contend that some principals are selecting teachers solely on the basis of race.

Dawn Pasko, a local school council member at Lyon Elementary in Belmont-Cragin on the Northwest Side, contends a former principal harassed black teachers to force them out. When vacancies cropped up, she asserts, the principal hired only whites; in general, she adds, "You wouldn't see five people coming in for an interview; you'd see only the one person he intended to hire anyway."

According to annual board reports, Lyon's faculty in 1992 was 72 percent white, 22 percent black and 6 percent other minorities; in 1987, it was 52 percent white, 45 percent black and 3 percent other minorities.

Pasko contends she made numerous calls to the central office and to outside organizations, such as the Lawyers School Reform Advisory Project, asking for an investigation, but "nothing ever

Segregated faculties

Under the School Board's desegregation consent decree, each school's faculty should be no more than 60 percent white and no more than 70 percent black and other minorities. Since reform, more schools are out of compliance; at many, however, a change in one or two positions would correct the situation.

Elementary Schools	1987	1992
Over 90% white	0	0
81-90% white	0	3
71-80% white	7	56
61-70% white	40	79
71-80% minority	105	83
81-90% minority	32	72
Over 90% minority	2	6
Total	186	299

High Schools	1987	1992
Over 90% white	0	0
81-90% white	0	0
71-80% white	1	8
61-70% white	24	16
71-80% minority	5	12
81-90% minority	0	1
Over 90% minority	0	0
Total	30	37

Source: *CATALYST* analysis of the Board of Education's Racial/Ethnic Surveys

happened," she says. And although she is white, Pasko wants her son to have minority teachers. "He's getting only one segment of society teaching him. That's not the way society is. If he has only white females teaching him, and he gets a job and the person who hires and supervises him is black, what's he going to do?" ■

Interns Molly Dunn and Tonya McClarin contributed to this article.

Crisis undercuts intern program



Audrey Askins (left) and mentor Joann Podkul (right) with Bowen High student Alma Reyes. Askins was a computer operator before changing careers to become a teacher.

by Debra Williams

Last year, the Board of Education, Chicago Teachers Union, nine universities and the Golden Apple Foundation launched Teachers for Chicago to help working adults change careers and become teachers.

Under the program, aspiring teachers spend two years teaching under the guidance of a mentor teacher while taking courses for certification and a master's degree in education.

The program has received high marks. In its first year, Teachers for Chicago showed "the ability to select and retain talented and dedicated entrants into the teaching profession," reported evaluator Shaunti Knauth. Further, she noted, some principals "voted with their feet" and requested a second group of teacher interns for 1993-94.

But then the school system's financial crisis intruded, setting off a chain of events that prompted CTU President Jacqueline Vaughn to fire off a letter Sept. 10 to Supt. Argie Johnson saying the union was withdrawing its support.

Subsequently, John Kotsakis,

Vaughn's assistant for educational issues, told *CATALYST*, "The Teachers Union still supports the program, but the board and the union will have to have some discussion on how to fit this program into the present circumstances."

At issue is whether supernumerary teachers, now called reserve teachers, can lay claim to positions held by the teacher interns. Under the original agreement, interns are assigned to vacant teaching positions at schools. However, when the board and union agreed to scheduling and other changes that eliminated close to 1,000 teaching positions this semester, some regular teachers lost their posts, while teacher interns kept theirs.

Kotsakis says the union's interpretation of the agreement is that if certified teacher positions were ever jeopardized, they would have priority.

"It has sort of trickled down to principals that intern positions should be filled with supernumeraries," says Jan Hively, executive director of the Golden Apple Foundation, the program's fiscal agent.

As a result, 10 of 184 interns have been bumped to other schools to make

room for reserve teachers, separating them from their original mentors and peers. Program evaluator Colleen Kamin says, however, that these interns appear to be adjusting well to their new schools and mentors.

All the shuffling has made it difficult for many interns to get paid, adds Hively, explaining that the board's personnel office counted their jobs as vacancies that were given to reserve teachers. "Some have not been paid since September, and these people are in school full time, and many have families to support," she says.

The administration of Teachers for Chicago also is somewhat in limbo. Hively has resigned from the Golden Apple Foundation, effective Jan. 1, and the Board of Education's program coordinator, John Moscinski, took early retirement.

As *CATALYST* goes to press, a board hiring freeze has stalled appointment of Moscinski's successor, Ruby Ford, a teacher who most recently worked at Project CANAL, a board desegregation program.

'They want to teach'

For the most part, however, enthusiasm for the program remains high.

"These are not the greatest times to go into teaching, particularly when you are teaching children who are struggling with outside problems and pressures," says Hazel Steward, principal of Tilden High School. "But these people are so energetic, and they want to teach. They have degrees, they have options to do other things if that is what they want, but they don't. They want to teach."

Tilden has five interns from last year and an additional eight who joined the program this year. Tilden also was spared staff cuts because its enrollment increased, Steward says. "I'm lucky in that I still have my staff and I also get to keep my 'babies.' That's what I call them even though some are as old as I am."

Ursula Ross, a second-year participant who is teaching math at Tilden (following 18 years of work in the board's departments of research and evaluation and of facilities planning), says she loves teaching but sometimes wonders whether she is crazy.

"This program is very intense," explains Ross. "Not only am I teaching,

but I also have five classes that I have to keep up with, and I have a 10- and a 12-year old at home."

Ross credits her mentor and principal for helping her keep it all together. "They have been very supportive."

'Drop out' wants to return

Twenty-two of the program's participants have dropped out so far, including nine of the initial 100 interns and 13 of this year's interns.

Avis Owen-Burns, who had a special education assignment, dropped out this year, but she blames the school where she was assigned rather than the program.

"I had 10 children, ages 8 to 14, and no teacher aide. I had a nine-year-old who couldn't read and no textbook for that child. I didn't have any teaching materials. And the children were very violent, but the school's administration pretended it didn't exist. On top of that, my mentor was located in another building. Even though she told me to call her if I needed her, I didn't see her often and couldn't leave my class to call her if I wanted to. I just couldn't take it."

Owen-Burns says she became depressed and often broke out in hives. "I don't think the problem was with the program but with that particular school. I have asked Teachers for Chicago to find me another position, but right now that's hard to do."

In the meantime, Owen-Burns is still interested in teaching and has applied to the Roman Catholic Archdiocese and to a private school. She still plans to complete her degree in learning disabilities at Saint Xavier University, too.

Hively says that most of those who quit did so for personal reasons, such as an illness, a move out of state, a death, a spouse who lost a job and the decision to enter another graduate program. She concedes, though, that the stress of teaching prompted some departures.

Still, a majority of interns and residents (second-year participants) know stress comes with the territory and plan to ride it out.

"Oh, yes, I get stressed and I get really tired," says Audrey Askins, a resident at Bowen High School who teaches typing. "But these kids need to know that people care about them and their futures. That's why I'm determined to stick with it." ■

Briefing book: Teachers for Chicago

How does the program work?

Aspiring teachers take university courses for a summer and then are assigned to classrooms, where they teach for two years under the guidance of mentor teachers. At the same time, they take courses leading to certification and a master's degree in education. Upon successful completion of the program, participants are required to teach at least two years in the Chicago public schools.

There is one mentor for every four interns (first-year participants) or residents (second-year participants). Mentors are freed from their own classroom duties and serve as adjunct faculty members at the college or university their interns attend.

This year, interns and residents have been assigned to 18 high schools and 24 elementary schools.

Nine Chicago area colleges and universities are participating: Chicago State, Columbia, Concordia, DePaul, Loyola, Northeastern Illinois, Roosevelt, Rosary and Saint Xavier. Each appoints a liaison to the program, who visits the interns and residents at their schools.

Who are the participants?

This year, there are 101 interns and 83 residents, chosen from over 1,000 applicants. A little over half are female, and more than 50 percent are black. They range in age from early 20s to mid-50s. Their previous careers are just as diverse, including law, music, banking, accounting and computer programming. Most have never taught; others have been substitute teachers.

Twenty-two successful applicants have dropped out, including 13 who started the program this year.

How are participants chosen?

Candidates fill out an application and must have a bachelor's degree. Then, they go through an interview process that focuses on seven areas associated with successful urban teaching: persistence, response to authority, applying generalizations about learning and development to particular classroom situations, attitude toward at-risk students, professional orientation, resis-

tance to burnout and the ability to study behavior, motives and responses.

"We are trained to present candidates with certain situations involving these areas and to look for certain responses and then to rate these responses," says Theresa Threet, who is a mentor teacher at Terrell Elementary.

The process was developed by Martin Haberman, a professor at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee.

How much does the program cost?

In its second year, \$29,900 per participant, which includes salary, a health care package, tuition and administrative costs.

How is it funded?

The Board of Education pays interns' and residents' salaries (at the rate of full-time substitutes) and their tuition and medical insurance. Since participants fill regular teaching vacancies, this does not add to board costs. A three-year \$352,000 grant from the Chicago Community Trust covers start-up and training costs; an additional five-year \$110,000 grant pays for evaluations.

Where to apply?

For an application or for more information, call Teachers for Chicago (312) 535-7369.



Karen Devine (left), with student Nancy Figueroa. Devine, a former Catholic school teacher, joined Teachers for Chicago to gain experience and certification.

Profiles

Black men back in class

In 1992, only about 2,390 of Chicago's 25,740 public school teachers, or 9 percent, were black males, according to a Board of Education report.

Teachers for Chicago is doing better—22 of this year's 104 new participants in the program, or 21 percent, are black males. Here are three, who talk about why they left other careers to become teachers and what teaching is like for them.

■
James Patterson, 29, B.A. in computer systems and military history. Served in the U.S. Army and then became a computer programmer with Arthur Andersen for two years. Now teaching U.S. history at Bowen High School.

"I always wanted to teach and would have right after I got out of the Army, but I couldn't because my wife was pregnant and needed medical benefits. I wasn't certified; all I could do was sub. So I went to Arthur Andersen.

"I am drawn to teaching because I think something drastic has to be done with these kids. We are losing a generation. If they are not getting killed, they are not getting the education to succeed and compete.

"I am tough. I am a college-prep-style teacher, which means I do a lot of lecturing, give quizzes four times a week, give out lots of handouts and

assign 5-10 pages of reading every night. I am used to discipline because of my military background and my attending Catholic schools. The kids are not used to someone being tough on them, but they need that if they are going to make it.

"I want to help them think critically and learn to work under pressure; believe me, the kids at St. Ignatius and other parochial and private schools do. I went to Quigley South High School; I did it every day.

"I hear some teachers say, 'Oh, he's too rough on those kids,' and I say, 'And?' Until my boss tells me to stop being so rough, I'm going to do what I have to do."

■
Paul Goldsmith, 41, B.A. in independent studies. Held a variety of jobs, including forklift driver, security guard and singer/saxophone player. Now teaching a split class (second and third grade) at Terrell Elementary School.

"My family told me I should have become a teacher a long time ago. I am a natural teacher; it comes very easy to me.

"Everyone may not come in contact with a fireman or a policeman, but everyone has to deal with a teacher. It is an important occupation. What effect a teacher has on a child can affect that child as an adult. The critical times for little black boys are in the third, fourth and fifth grades. They either make it or break it around these ages. They are either turned on to education or they are not.

"A major influence for me was my first black teacher at Bond School, Ralph Jacques. He showed me that a black man could be proud and educated, could have class and dress well,



Intern James Patterson, who served in the U.S. Army, is known around Bowen High as a "no-nonsense" teacher.

could know all about a subject and be happy about it. Today, it's getting harder to find a black man who is straight, not on drugs or not in the prison system. I am concerned about black men becoming extinct. I wanted to do something about it."

■
Jeffery Jones, 22, B.A. in psychology. Formerly, a caseworker with Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, serving elderly adults. Now teaching a split class (first and second grades) at Terrell Elementary School.

"I like teaching and working with children and eventually wanted to become a child psychologist. I thought by working with children in the public school system, I would get an idea of what I would be dealing with as a psychologist. I had heard that public school kids have a lot of problems learning and understanding things. I'm finding some of that information is false. The difference is in the way material is presented to students. If it is presented clearly and understandably, learning is easy. That's what I want to do, make learning easy.

"I wanted to teach in a high school, but I don't think I would be as effective. I'm not that much older than those students now. Maybe in the future.

"I'm from Alabama and have only been in Chicago for almost two years. People tease me about being so young and being a teacher, but my family is proud of what I do."

Debra Williams



Jeffery Jones (left) and Paul Goldsmith, both teacher interns at Terrell School, turned to teaching to make a difference in the lives of young black children.

Profile

Bowen grad knows secrets

During her first year as a teacher intern at Bowen High School, Maria Moreno had her students baffled. Unlike a typical newcomer, Moreno knew which doors kids would use to sneak out, where they would hide out and other tricks they would play to get out of going to class.

Moreno knew their secrets because she once was a student at Bowen, graduating in 1984. She returned somewhat by chance; the school needed a math teacher bilingual in English and Spanish, and Teachers for Chicago asked her to accept the assignment. "I was laughing so hard I couldn't believe it," she recalls. "What are the chances of that happening?"

"When I was in high school I wanted to teach," Moreno says, but a teacher to whom she confided her career goal steered her elsewhere. "She told me to do something more exciting and try the business sector. I think she was

dissatisfied with teaching and thought I might be too."

Following the advice, Moreno earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from the Illinois Institute of Technology and eventually became a cash management banker at First National Bank of Chicago, where she worked as a troubleshooter for insurance companies.

"It was interesting, but I thought to myself: Who am I working for? Just some big company. I just wasn't satisfied. I felt I'd be happier doing something that really counted, and—I know it sounds corny—but as a Hispanic woman, I wanted to give back to the community."

By chance, Moreno's brother heard about Teachers for Chicago on the radio. She applied and was accepted.

When her students found out where she came from, they couldn't believe it. "They marveled, 'You left a good job to come and teach here? You're crazy,'" she relates.

But Moreno says she feels connected at Bowen and believes she is making a difference. She lived in the area; she knows the neighborhood. "When kids say they have trouble coming to school using a certain route, I tell them how to get here another way."

One thing makes her a little uncom-



Maria Moreno (left), a 1984 Bowen High graduate, is now a Bowen High teacher.

fortable, though: Her former teachers at Bowen expect her to call them by their first names. "They tell me all the time, 'You're grown, and you're a teacher now; call me by my first name.' But I just can't. I still have to call them Mrs."

As for the teacher who steered her into business, "She was surprised to see me, but told me that she's happy that I was doing what I want to do. I guess it must have been my calling to teach."

Debra Williams

DePaul's intern program takes a different tack

Before Teachers for Chicago, there was DePaul University's Urban Teacher Corps. While both give career-changing teacher interns the chance to gain classroom experience while qualifying for their teaching certificates, the programs are different in some significant respects.

The main goal of the Urban Teacher Corps is to improve schools; preparing teachers for the classroom is secondary.

The program is a one-year graduate certification program that places interns in schools to create teacher networks, assist experienced teachers in the classroom and establish resource centers that draw on DePaul's experience and expertise.

Unlike Teachers for Chicago, Urban Teacher Corps interns are not in charge of their own classrooms; they work alongside teachers much the way student teachers do. They progress

from working with small groups of students to whole classes, all under the watchful eye of experienced teachers. What the regular teachers get in return is time and the assistance of resourceful, aspiring teachers.

"Our interns help facilitate the work of the professionals already in place at the school—the teachers," says Barbara Radner, director of DePaul's Center for Urban Education and one of the program's designers. "And it was teachers who helped plan the program."

Teacher interns help prepare materials or take charge of a group of students who need to focus on a specific skill or project, freeing up the classroom teacher for other work. All the while, the interns are learning how to be effective teachers.

The resource centers make information available to every teacher in the school on such topics as new curricula.

"Let's say it's math month," explains Radner. "The Center for Urban Education has all kinds of information on creating math tests and creative ways to teach math. Our interns take this information back to their schools, to their resource center, and this information is available to the whole school."

Six schools are part of the program—Terrell, Hartigan, Mason, Gale, Casals and Muñoz Marin; they use state Chapter 1 money to pay interns' salaries, which are comparable to those of substitute teachers.

Also unlike Teachers for Chicago, Urban Teacher Corps interns are responsible for their tuition.

The Urban Teacher Corps also is smaller, with only 22 interns. Half come from the Peace Corps, under a partnership agreement with DePaul; the others come from a variety of fields, mainly business. *Debra Williams*

Future Teachers of Chicago heading to all city high schools

by Dan Weissmann

By 1997, every high school in the city—public and parochial—will have a program aimed at encouraging minority teens to pursue teaching careers. That's the goal of a collection of community groups and universities that have won \$1,725,000 in one- and three-year grants to create Future Teachers of Chicago.

The money comes from the state and federal governments, which seek to close the growing gap between the number of minority students and the number of minority teachers.

In the last 10 years, the minority graduation rate from undergraduate education programs has declined 35 percent nationwide, says Janice Wilcox, a federal official who runs the program from which Future Teachers is getting over \$500,000 this year.

Wilcox says projections indicate that "by the year 2000, 5 percent of the country's teaching force will be minorities, and a third of students overall will be minority; by that time, we expect that at least 53 major cities will have mostly minority populations."

Chicago is doing better at hiring black teachers than most cities; but, like others, it lags in hiring Hispanics (see chart).

Future Teachers of Chicago was one of six initiatives to receive funding under the federal program—out of 65 appli-

cants. The Education Department is distributing a total of \$2.48 million this year in a program created under the Higher Education Amendments of 1992.

Currently, about 20 city schools have recruitment programs. At the initiative of Janet Hively, executive director of the Golden Apple Foundation, all the sponsoring organizations last year agreed to create a citywide teacher-recruitment coalition.

Early last summer, the coalition applied for its first grant: \$125,000 from the Illinois State Board of Higher Education, to bring together a group that included nine colleges and universities, CYCLE, the Chicago Urban League, the Golden Apple Foundation, the Chicago Teachers Union and the Chicago and Illinois boards of education.

Then, a few days after the state grant application had been sent—and just after most of the participants had left for vacation—CYCLE's director got wind of a much larger federal grant program. The deadline was only two weeks away.

To write the grant, Rutha Gibson, director of CYCLE's program, cut her vacation short, and Jerry Olson, director of Northeastern Illinois University's Chicago Teachers' Center, got out of his sick-bed (he had pneumonia).

Their two-week writing sprint climaxed in a late-night, last-minute drive to the O'Hare Airport offices of Federal Express; they arrived five minutes before

closing. Four months later, the coalition was looking at a pledge of \$1.6 million, to be used over the next three years.

Launching the citywide program has been no easier. Because some of the partners in the state grant couldn't be reached in time to include them in the federal application, the two grants theoretically fund two different programs with two different sets of partners.

However, the coalition is trying to work out a structure that will allow one organization to run both grants, with Gibson at the helm. The result so far is an administrative behemoth that Hively calls "overwhelming."

Joanne Ekberg, Gibson's assistant at CYCLE, agrees that the task is imposing. "The program has taken on such monstrous proportions that it's difficult even for us to keep our brains wrapped around it."

The plans are that, within a year, the group will be running programs in at least two dozen high schools, their feeder elementary schools and several universities.

Even now, though, the high school programs continue to expand. Gibson points out that starting new programs is easier than it once was. "You put up a poster with the name of a teacher, a time and a room number, and you get 20 to 25 people," she enthuses. Students at most schools have heard about the Future Teachers program already, she says, from friends and relatives at schools where the program has been around a while. ■

Racial make-up of student body, faculty

	Chicago		New York		Los Angeles		Dade (Miami)		Philadelphia		Detroit	
	Students	Staff	Students	Staff	Students	Staff	Students	Staff	Students	Staff	Students	Staff
White	12%	44%	19%	68%	13%	60%	17%	49%	22%	61%	7%	35%
Black	57%	47%	38%	19%	15%	17%	34%	26%	63%	36%	89%	63%
Hispanic	28%	7%	35%	11%	65%	14%	48%	24%	10%	2%	3%	1%
Other	3%	2%	8%	2%	7%	9%	1%	1%	5%	1%	1%	1%
Total minority	88%	56%	81%	32%	87%	40%	83%	51%	78%	39%	93%	65%

Source: City boards of education

Recruiting kids for teaching



JOHN BOOZ

11th-grader Zachary Struther works in Dunbar Vocational High School's offices as part of Dunbar's Future Teachers program; the program used to offer students teaching experience as study hall tutors, but with most high school study halls gone this year, students are filling in elsewhere.

Several programs to attract minority students to teaching are already at work in Chicago's public high schools.

■ **FUTURE TEACHERS** Run by a Near North Side youth agency called CYCLE (Community Youth Creative Learning Experience), this is the largest of the existing programs, and it's the model for the citywide Future Teachers of Chicago. CYCLE's Future Teachers started in 1990 at six high schools, and by last June it boasted 550 members in 12 schools.

Program Director Rutha Gibson, who now directs Future Teachers of Chicago, attributes the program's success to the services it offers participants: trips to colleges, help getting into college and even modest stipends for some members. About 125 of the kids were paid minimum wage for working a few hours a week last year as tutors and teacher aides.

Gibson and others believe the hands-on experience is crucial, but this year's financial crisis put that experience on hold. Most of the tutoring had taken place in study halls; when the school board and the teachers union agreed to lengthen high school class periods, most study halls were cut. As a result, most of the tutoring fell by the wayside.

That change is a loss, agrees Gwen Williams, the program's coordinator at Dunbar Vocational High School. "It cuts off a lot of interaction that's necessary for them to see what it's like to teach. They've lost that."

In the meantime, some schools have found new work for club members, like helping out in school offices, which, in the wake of this year's staffing cuts, are short-handed. And program staff are looking for new tutoring venues for students before and after school.

■ **SMART** (Science and Math Advocacy for the Recruitment of Teachers) Run by the Urban League and Northwestern University's Center for Talent Development, SMART has worked since 1990 to encourage 60 students from DuSable, Kenwood and Phillips high schools to become math and science teachers.

Philinda Coleman of the Urban League and Avis Wright from Northwestern convene weekly "club meetings" at each school, provide tutoring and other academic supports, work with school staff to keep the clubs running, host events at the Urban League and arrange activities with outside institutions.

For example, some participants

spent a week at Illinois State University in the summer of 1992.

Coleman says she and Wright made sure they became part of students' lives by, for example, giving students their phone numbers, attending student events when invited and opening the weekly meetings to personal concerns that don't always get addressed in school.

■ **GOLDEN APPLE SCHOLARS** Launched by the local Golden Apple Foundation in 1988, the program works with aspiring teachers from their senior year in high school through their fifth year of teaching. High school teachers can nominate 11th-graders whom they think would make good teachers, and nominated students can apply in their last year of high school.

As college students, Golden Apple Scholars are paired with mentor teachers and spend their summers at a "residential institute" at DePaul University; they teach at local schools in the morning and take classes at DePaul in the afternoon. Golden Apple pays for their tuition, room, board and a small stipend. During the school year, the program arranges work-study teaching jobs. Finally, it makes students' loan payments during their first five years of teaching.

■ **FUTURE TEACHER CLUBS** Since 1991, the education department at Chicago State University has sponsored Future Teacher Clubs at five South Side high schools (DuSable, Fenger, Julian, Chicago Vocational and Morgan Park). About 100 kids participate, taking field trips to Chicago State and vying for eight annual scholarships to Chicago State.

■ **BOWEN TEACHERS ACADEMY** This year, Bowen High School opened a Teachers Academy minischool for 50 ninth-graders. Golden Apple, which proposed the program, helped the school secure a \$15,000 grant from the Fry Foundation.

Joann Podkul, a mentor teacher with Teachers for Chicago, runs the program; as a mentor, Podkul doesn't have to teach regular classes, so she is free to meet with teachers and coordinate the Academy; otherwise, she says, she doesn't know how the program could work, since teachers no longer have time to meet during the school day.

Dan Weissmann

Mixing rote learning, Socratic seminars

by Lorraine Forte

It's a sunny Monday morning in November at Goldblatt Elementary School in Garfield Park. Debra Evans' third-graders are neatly dressed in the navy-and-white uniforms the school adopted this year to keep kids from imitating gang-style clothing. Half the class is answering questions on a worksheet; the other half is seated in a circle with Evans, taking turns reading a story about a young kangaroo named Toby.

Between turns, Evans asks questions from a script, alternately directing students to answer in unison or on their own. The questions are simple, sometimes repetitive, but designed to teach comprehension of basic facts and concepts: "What do they call Toby?" "A joey." "What is a joey?" "A baby kangaroo." "But was Toby a real baby?" "No." "So, what are they calling him when they call him a joey?" "A big baby."

Upstairs, Yvette Curington's eighth-graders take turns reading new vocabulary words out loud. As she calls on each student, Curington raps sharply on a desk in front of her with a ruler. When a student misreads a word, she gently but firmly pronounces it correctly and directs the student to repeat it. After each student has read a word list, Curington moves on, explaining an upcoming "reading checkout" test: Students will earn seven points for reading a paragraph in one minute or less, with points subtracted for every error. Curington next has students play a fact game, taking turns reading and

answering questions based on stories they have read.

Teachers teaching from a script? Students filling out worksheets and reciting lists of vocabulary words? To some educators, these methods might seem like a throwback to the bad old-days of "drill-and-kill" teaching. To Goldblatt's faculty, however, they're part of a new, highly structured teaching method they are counting on to raise test scores within the next few years.

The approach, called Direct Instruction, is "part of our Paideia concept," says Principal Lillian Nash. The Paideia program recommends that schools use three types of instruction: traditional didactic teaching, coaching and Socratic seminars, where children are constantly challenged to look at material in different ways. Faculty had realized the school was "good at holding seminars but weak on traditional instruction. That's why we decided to try it," Nash explains.

Interest up, scores still low

Paideia had gotten students more interested in reading and in actively expressing their ideas during seminars, says Paideia coordinator Shirleen Young. Still, test scores weren't rising, and the school believed that "kids could be doing better," observes instructional coordinator Jacqueline Mitchell.

Goldblatt kids don't necessarily come from homes where parents read to them regularly or otherwise help them become good readers; as a result,

students often need more intense instruction. "You can't assume that kids all have the same background. They don't, and [reading] is not necessarily reinforced when they leave [school]," Mitchell explains. "So you have to use the time you have in the best way you can."

Direct Instruction was piloted last year in all primary and several upper-grade classrooms; this year, it is being used schoolwide, to teach math as well as reading. Some progress is evident:

Kids speak their minds

It's Thursday morning, and Goldblatt students are in the midst of the weekly Socratic seminar that is the highlight of the school's Paideia program. Seventh-graders are discussing "I Just Kept On Smiling," the tale of a British schoolboy's theft of several workbooks.

The story has several twists: The boy confesses, but only after a classmate—who didn't see the theft—bullies him into doing so; the teacher doesn't believe the confession and punishes the whole class; another classmate also confesses, and the teacher believes him, even though he is innocent and has no knowledge of the theft.

Darlene Riley's class debates the boy's motive for stealing, unclear in the story. One young man says he took them "for fun. If he wanted to get ahead [in his schoolwork] he could have used them. But when he got ready to use them he started to think about his conscience—remember his hands was sweating?" A classmate disagrees: "If his hands were sweating, his conscience bothering him, he didn't steal for the fun of it. . . . It's not fun if you can't tell nobody."

Several classrooms down the hall, Dhamana Shauri's class discusses

Primary students throughout the school are reading almost at grade-level for the first time, and almost every student in one class of low-achievers made a year's worth of progress in reading last year, Nash reports.

"I thought, Oh, we're going to lose that money," she says, referring to federal Chapter 1 funds targeted at low-achieving students—money Goldblatt will lose if test scores rise. "But I'd rather lose it for that reason than keep it."

Evans, whose third-graders have begun working on the program's fourth-grade lessons, predicts that most of her class will be reading at close to a fifth-grade level by the end of

why the teacher didn't believe the boy's confession. Nearly all of them agree that the boy's demeanor, as described in the story, was too composed. "He was too straight," says one young man. "If someone ask you if you did something [wrong], you're scared. He just stood there, said 'Yes, sir, No sir.'" A second young man observes that the boy wasn't sincere because he didn't return the books: "If somebody's guilty, they bring whatever it is to you and say, 'Here, I stole it.'"

Shauri poses a question: Is confessing to keep from getting beaten up right or wrong, even if you're guilty? One young man says it's right, "because you still confessed." But a young girl says no, because "you're only doing it to keep from getting beat up."

Progress not captured by tests

Goldblatt adopted the Paideia program, a multifaceted approach to teaching developed by philosopher Mortimer Adler, in 1984.

Since then, "There's a change in the kids you can't define by test scores," says Shirleen Young, coordinator for the Paideia program. "They become interested in reading, get involved in more [academic] competitions—and

the year. "They bother me to do two lessons a day," she says with a laugh.

Two years ago, former local school council (LSC) chair Jesse Rivers was "flipping from channel to channel on TV" and saw a segment of the news-magazine "Prime-Time Live" that reported how Direct Instruction had led to dramatic reading gains at an inner-city Houston school. Rivers told

Nash about the program; later, both were impressed by a presentation the Houston principal made at a local education conference.

Meanwhile, the Interfaith Organizing Project, an area community group, had been working with the Chicago White Sox organization, which wanted to gain support for the Bulls/Blackhawks stadium now being built on the West Side



TONY GETSUG

Kindergartners practice a phonics lesson at Goldblatt. With the help of state Chapter 1 funds, the school now has two full-day kindergartens. Goldblatt lost a Head Start when the School Board transferred Head Starts to private agencies, but the school got a state-funded prekindergarten in its place.

they're coming up winners."

Jesse Rivers, former local school council chair, says Paideia has helped her fourth-grade grandson learn to express himself more readily; he also is reading at a higher level. At her church, she adds, Goldblatt students are much more likely to speak up and express their thoughts during Sunday school discussions. The freedom to speak their minds "is what kids like. They can express themselves without someone telling them to shut up," Rivers says with a laugh.

In recent years, Goldblatt has expanded the program by conducting Socratic seminars for parents to introduce them to the concept, and joint seminars for parents and students. Parents are also welcome to participate in faculty semi-

nars held every month.

Paideia also is the centerpiece of the "Saturday Scholars" program, held in conjunction with "sister" school, Sabin Magnet Elementary in West Town. The program brings together students who have graduated from both schools for seminars every month; after the seminar, students receive coaching in writing, listening and speaking.

Volunteers from American National Bank, which adopted both schools in 1988, participate in the seminars and help with coaching; the bank also furnished a special "seminar room" at Goldblatt, purchasing tables and chairs and sets of books.

Lorraine Forte

GOLDBLATT ELEMENTARY

(the Bulls and the White Sox have the same owner). The Project asked the White Sox to provide funding for schools to implement Direct Instruction; the White Sox Charities later paid for principals and LSC members from several interested schools, including Goldblatt, to visit the Houston school. Coordinator Mitchell also visited. To date, Chicago White Sox Charities has spent about \$100,000 to train teachers at Goldblatt and eight other schools.

Initially, some Goldblatt teachers were skeptical about the program, thinking it too structured. But the LSC fought to have it implemented, and, despite the initial resistance, most teachers now "like it because they see it work," Mitchell says.

Professional environment

This year, Goldblatt is one of a dozen schools participating in the School Achievement Structure program, created by Barbara Sizemore, dean of the College of Education at DePaul University.

Sizemore's program requires schools to create a leadership team, define a schoolwide mission and con-

stantly monitor student progress. Goldblatt already had two-thirds of the work done, Assistant Principal Sandy Anast points out. As a Paideia school, it had a "mission," and as a Project CANAL school, it had a leadership team in place. (CANAL, short for Creating a New Approach to Learning, is a Board of Education initiative launched with federal desegregation funds.)

Perhaps most important, however, Sizemore stresses that inner-city minority children *can* learn. Her attitude played a key role in the school's decision to participate, says Assistant Principal Olga Saunders, who is head of the leadership team. "For too long, we [educators] have gotten by with the excuse that because kids are minority, fit into a certain mode socioeconomically, that they can't learn."

Undergoing training for Direct Instruction and participating in the DePaul program have helped bring teachers together, Saunders says. "It's helping us pool our resources. It feels more like a professional environment."

Now, teachers are coming in as early as 7:30 in the morning, Nash points out. "They're buying into it [Sizemore's program] because they're doing the planning."

No fear of firing

New teaching blood has also been key to improving Goldblatt. About half the faculty is new since reform, when Nash arrived from Beasley Magnet Elementary, where she had been assistant principal. Some teachers retired, while others sought and found new jobs; two, however, were forced out by Nash, who insists that she will "do the paperwork" to fire an incompetent teacher if that's what it takes.

"I gave them the choice of finding a new school, or else I would start the [firing] process," Nash relates. "Unfortunately, that didn't get them fired, but it got them out of our school." One found a job at another school; the second left the system. Sometime later, the principal who had hired the first teacher called Nash to complain about the teacher's performance. But Nash shrugs off the complaint: "She wouldn't do the paperwork, so . . ."

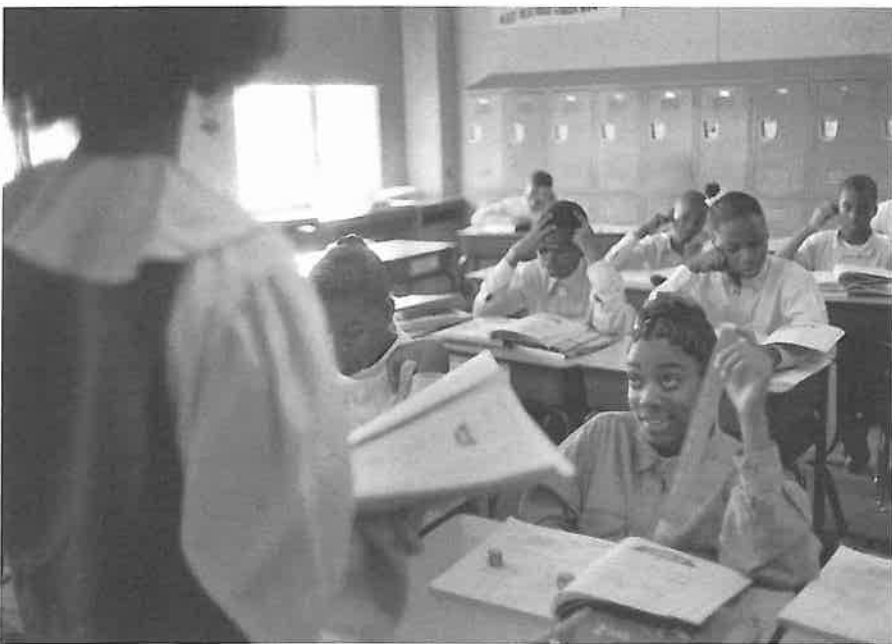
Nash also rid the school of a number of FTBs, or full-time substitutes, who had made no effort to become certified. "I felt if they didn't seek certification, they weren't interested in kids; so when I found new people, I just bumped them out."

Still, three new teachers who arrived as FTBs have become "some of the best teachers in the school," Nash says. The three came from a school where, she reports, the LSC forced the the new principal to get rid of them because they were not certified. Two of three now have their certificates; the third is actively working toward it.

Nash credits her decision to hire two assistant principals, one with state Chapter 1 funds, with giving her the time to work with teachers.

"I could not do administrative paperwork, discipline and so forth and still be an instructional leader," she says. "Now I go to every classroom every day. It was money well spent." ■

For additional information about Goldblatt's change efforts, call Assistant Principal Sandy Anast, Assistant Principal Olga Saunders or Principal Lillian Nash at (312) 534-6860.



Eighth-graders in Yvette Curington's class pay strict attention during a vocabulary lesson.

Be kind to kids, teachers with your prototype schools

by Ezra D. Ehrenkrantz and Stanton Eckstut

To speed the construction of new schools in overcrowded neighborhoods, the Public Building Commission of Chicago is developing prototype architectural plans, which will be adapted for each new site. Using prototypes, rather than designing each new school from scratch, will cut 10 months from the design and construction process, the commission estimates. In the Opinion piece below, two architects who designed prototype schools for New York City offer some advice.

In the late 1980s, New York City embarked on an accelerated school building program. However, "construction as usual"—that is, designing and building each school from scratch—led to unacceptably long lead times, sometimes as long as a decade. Other disadvantages were high design and construction costs because the Board of Education staff devoted too much of its limited time to each new school.

Ezra D. Ehrenkrantz, FAIA, and Stanton Eckstut, FAIA, are principals at Ehrenkrantz & Eckstut, a New York City-based architectural and planning firm that specializes in large-scale urban design, mixed-use commercial and residential properties, public buildings, historic preservation and educational facilities. In the past three years, the firm has received more than \$8 million in research grants from foundations to develop new designs for educational facilities and related building systems.

In 1987, therefore, the Board of Education initiated the Prototype School Program. Later that year, it selected four firms, including Ehrenkrantz & Eckstut, to prepare plans for different prototype schools. For this program, our firm, which has worked on school and university buildings since the 1960s, designed a 1,200-student prototype school, pre-school through fifth grade.

Our prototype school building system features five different "building blocks" that contain all of the programmed spaces for the school—two 550-student components, each with its own lunchroom, art room and computer facility; a 100-student citywide special education facility; an auditorium, a library and a gym to be shared by all students; and administrative offices, teachers' facilities and service operations.

These five building blocks can be configured in a variety of ways to meet the individual requirements of each site, with usable and secure outdoor spaces like playgrounds and meeting places. Within the school, each of the classrooms has been designed to give the teacher and students the greatest flexibility for learning and interaction.

In designing the prototype schools building system in New York City, our firm established six principles, which would be applicable to Chicago and other large cities:

■ DESIGN SCHOOLS FOR THE CHILDREN.

First and foremost, a school must fulfill its reason for being: the education of our children. Because children will spend many of their waking hours within this building, it must not isolate or intimidate them. Instead, the school must protect and nourish the students

who may also face considerable difficulties at home or in their neighborhoods.

The 1,200-student prototype school is arranged in small recognizable components, because young children need hierarchies in the ways they relate to people as they move from the family into society step by step. The school building's design and layout support this personal growth and lessen the all-too-common anonymity of big-city schools.

Three nine-by-four-foot windows in each classroom provide plenty of natural light. Corridors are relatively short and, therefore, unintimidating, and they end in windowed meeting areas for the use of nearby classrooms.

The front entrances have several steps, in addition to a handicap ramp, to create a sense of arrival and to offer pleasant places for the children to sit or stand before and after school. The prototype school also provides clearly defined playgrounds and meeting places for children of various ages.

■ **CREATE CLASSROOMS WITH BUILT-IN FLEXIBILITY.** Rather than straightjacket children and teachers into certain educational approaches, built-in classroom flexibility satisfies pupils' and teachers' immediate needs and anticipates future changes in educational principles and technology.

Floor-tile patterns divide the classroom into different areas. A trelliswork suspended from the ceiling can be used to hang banners and flags, and it offers a support structure for flexible room dividers or solid partitions. The classroom has plenty of electric outlets for computer uses. Neutral colors provide a quiet background for classroom activity and student art.

■ **INTEGRATE THE NEW SCHOOL INTO THE EXISTING COMMUNITY.** A school does not exist in a vacuum. Instead, it is an integral part of its community and must physically complement the surrounding residences and businesses.

The prototype schools are designed as civic architecture in the tradition of earlier public schools. The buildings adopt the surrounding community's residential scale, and they use familiar materials like red brick and cast stone, enlivened with some modern details, so that they fit into their neighborhood settings.

This flexibility of styles and of materials-use assures community compatibility in New York, Chicago or any other large city.

Because new big-city schools are usually fit-in projects within densely built communities, they often occupy oddly shaped and/or small sites. The flexible five-component building block system enables the school to fit onto a difficult site as well as enhance the streetscape and community.

For example, one of our prototype school sites in New York City faces a residential neighborhood on one side and an industrial site on the other. So, our firm set the attractive residentially scaled classroom blocks next to the residences and the windowless gym next to the industrial buildings.

■ **ACHIEVE MAXIMUM SECURITY INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL.** In an era when crime and drugs afflict many big-city schools, enhanced security has become a paramount concern for teachers, par-

ents and children. In particular, the school should be an oasis of security for children who often fear for their safety in their own neighborhoods.

In the prototype school, each pre-kindergarten through second-grade classroom has its own bathroom, drinking fountain and sink so that teachers can keep track of students more closely, and the young children can avoid any potential problems in the communal bathrooms and hallways. Each classroom has a window looking onto the hallways so that the teacher and students can "own" and supervise that space.

Each classroom also has three communication systems: a telephone, a two-way speaker system and a panic button. At night, motion detectors are activated inside the school.

When the school building serves various before-class or after-class functions, the unused classroom and administration sections can be closed off from visitors.

Outside, the school has a handsome 12-foot fence of brick, cast stone and steel posts. A landscaped buffer separates the fence from the school so that an intruder cannot climb the fence and step onto the building facade or first-floor window guards.

■ **MEET TEACHERS' AND STAFF'S NEEDS.** Like the children, teachers and staff also spend much of their days in schools. Their needs are as complex and important as the children's. The prototype schools offer teachers flexible classrooms, easier supervision of students and better security, as mentioned

above, as well as separate meeting areas and lunchrooms. Above all, a school that offers an attractive and supportive educational setting for children provides a similarly appealing work environment for teachers and staff.

■ **SERVE NON-CLASSROOM FUNCTIONS MORE SUCCESSFULLY.** Big-city schools have become community focal points, serving neighborhoods with functions that often include three-meal-a-day nutrition programs, day-long child-care activities, after-class student support programs and community-outreach activities.

The prototype schools incorporate these activities effectively and efficiently. When classroom and administration portions are sealed off from the after-school functions in the gym, auditorium or lunchroom, the result is not only enhanced security but also reduced maintenance, utilities and staff costs.

Four of Ehrenkrantz & Eckstut's prototype schools are now under construction in New York City. The first to be completed, in spring 1994, will be PS-7 in the Elmhurst section of Queens.

Until these prototype schools are finished, the New York City Board of Education—as well as other school districts like Chicago—cannot calculate exactly how much time and money have been saved by this innovative approach to school design and construction.

However, some advantages of prototype schools are already clear. The five building blocks are in the architect's computer. Only the linkages between the blocks and the school's overall



This prototype school, designed by Ehrenkrantz & Eckstut, features five "building blocks" that contain two 550-student components, each with its own lunchroom, art room and computer facility.

facade need to be designed to fit each site. For subsequent schools, therefore, the design process will be expedited, thereby cutting lead time and reducing professional fees.

After Ehrenkrantz & Eckstut's prototype schools are completed in New York City next year, construction costs and quality control for subsequent buildings will be easier to predict and control, because the architects and the School Construction Authority will not "reinvent the wheel" each time. With each new school in the program, expectations will be more realistic, and satisfaction will be more certain for

children, staff and neighborhoods.

In meeting the needs of the children, staff and community, the Prototype School Program will not only build a better educational future in New York but also offer valuable lessons to other large cities such as Chicago. ■

For more reading

School Ways: The Planning and Design of America's Schools "provides a comprehensive look at all phases of school construction, from evaluating existing facilities and developing long-range

plans to actually preparing educational specifications," according to a review in the August 1993 issue of *The School Administrator*.

Written by educational planning consultant Ben E. Graves, "*School Ways* is beautifully illustrated and contains photographs, drawings, and floor plans of award-winning schools, recently completed projects, and some projects still on the drawing board," the review says.

Graves, Ben E. *School Ways: The Planning and Design of America's Schools*. (1993) New York: McGraw-Hill. 237pp plus index. \$39.50.

CTU best leader for real change

by John Kotsakis and Deborah Walsh

There is a handful of teachers—maybe more—in every school in this city ready and willing to make the difficult and dramatic changes in teaching and learning necessary to transform our schools. The challenge is finding them, encouraging them and supporting them as they struggle with the ideas and the issues essential to reinventing—not merely fixing—schools. Imagine these teachers turning to their union to make it happen.

We believe, and are out to prove, that the teachers' union can be a powerful catalyst for effecting the kinds of changes in schooling that are imperative for today's world. These changes, if they are going to happen at all, will be carried out by front-line teachers. In fact, the teachers' union may be the

only institution capable of turning our schools around, given the credibility, trust and moral authority it has among its members.

Given three assumptions—that our schools should be reinvented not merely fixed, that there is a rump group in every school ready to go, and that the union could be a necessary catalyzing force to help them—we approached the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation for funding to create the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) Quest Center. The mission of the CTU Quest Center is "to help teaching professionals effect revolutionary change in the education of Chicago's children." By running conferences, courses, seminars and school presentations on restructuring issues, the center acts as a citywide catalyst for generating dialogue, discussion and debate on the need for school transformation.

But our most challenging and rewarding function is an annual competitive request for proposal (RFP) process to seek the most radical plans for whole-school or school-within-a-school change. In addition to having promising ideas, the proposals must also have the

sign-off of key school decision makers to assure the necessary support for the proposal team to carry out these ideas.

We are committed to having 50 Chicago public schools—the beginning of a critical mass in this district—deep into school transformation, and dozens of other schools well on their way, by the end of our three-year grant. Our ultimate goal is to help turn around enough schools in the system so that the system will never be the same again.

At the end of 18 months, we had our first 26 up and running, had worked intensively with 150 more, had attracted over 1,200 people (teachers, administrators and parents) to three conferences and had processed 1,200 registrations in 10 different restructuring courses that we designed.

Targeting 'rump groups'

Our strategy is simple. Given our belief that there is a group in every Chicago school just ready to go (a belief confirmed every time Quest Center staff walk into a building), we have created a process to find these people and have created a series of opportunities for them to get involved. These opportunities, or levels of involvement, fit into what teacher educator and researcher Phil Schlechy calls "flirtin', datin', courtin' and marryin'":

■ **FLIRTING** This describes individuals or groups at a school who know something is wrong with the school as it is and are interested in the possibilities

John Kotsakis is the Assistant to the President for Educational Issues, Chicago Teachers Union. Deborah Walsh is director of the CTU's Quest Center.



DISELLE ANGL

Third-grade teacher Kathleen Bragg goes over a reading lesson with her class at Revere School, one of 26 Quest Center schools.

for change. These are the people who attend our conferences or ask the Quest Center staff to come to their schools to provide an overview of what we're all about.

■ **DATING** This describes individuals—but more often teams of three or more—from a school who decide that the idea of transforming teaching and learning merits much more attention. These are the teachers who take Quest Center courses and are actively involved in engaging staff in their schools in dialogue about change.

■ **COURTING** At this phase, participants are definitely in teams, representing either a whole-school or school-within-a-school effort. Team members are engaged in thinking, discussing and developing ideas and plans for a major proposal for school change and Quest school status. Involvement with the Quest Center at this level includes advanced course work as well as technical assistance in the development and submission of proposals.

■ **MARRYING** This level represents Quest school status: proposals selected by the Quest Center Governing Board as promising initiatives for meaningful school transformation. Whole schools (or schools-within-schools) are involved in a three-year commitment to implement their plans. They receive an initial grant of \$3,000, and Quest Center staff are assigned to facilitate the implementation of proposals. If, at the end of three years, they can prove that their efforts have made a difference in student learning, they will receive a significant financial incentive and reward.

The response to our conferences and

courses has been very positive. Recognizing that teachers cannot do it alone, we strongly encourage (and offer incentives for) school teams to participate—teams including teachers, administrators and parents. Our aim is to create those 50—hopefully more—Quest schools.

One of our most effective strategies for generating discussion and involvement is an idea stolen from American Federation of Teachers President Albert Shanker: using the scouting merit badge concept in designing a course of study. We offer a 45-hour course called “Restructuring Our Schools: Transforming Teaching and Learning” as independent study for teams of three or more from a school. As with merit badges, a menu offers topic choices for active, engaged learning; school teams select from the topics to customize a course of study based on their schools’ needs. If we expect students to be active, engaged learners, isn’t it about time we asked teachers to be the same?

The entire course can be conducted at a team’s school during the time the team has available. Quest Center staff are available to come out and facilitate one or more sessions. In one year, more than 800 participants from more than 100 schools took this course, many using it as the basis for developing a proposal to be a Quest school.

Repeatedly in course evaluations, participants have cited the value of having an opportunity to engage in sustained dialogue on restructuring issues with colleagues in their own school. Our strategy with this course, obviously, is the development of a critical mass of

people in each building who press for the kind of changes required to create true centers of inquiry for students and teachers. In some of the participating schools, teams have numbered 20 or more.

Given the short time we have to turn our schools around and inspire public confidence in them, the imperative of systemic reform takes on a much greater urgency. We agree with the national trend toward the development of national standards and assessments as a structure upon which to build systemwide change.

In fact, we believe that it is so important, given the right kinds of content and performance standards, that we are not willing to wait until the national efforts can be put into place. Our students are sitting in our classrooms right now, and our Quest school teachers are ready to go right now.

For high standards

We, therefore, explicitly committed to the best of what exists right now and collaborated with the Chicago Board of Education to develop a clear, concise set of high standards for what students should know and be able to do to be prepared for today’s world. (See story on page 1.)

These standards (or what the state calls learning outcomes) will drive the instruction, the choice of curriculum and the design of locally based performance assessment (in addition to the mandated statewide assessment done at grades 3, 6, 8 and 11) in schools, and will be used as the basis on which to judge Quest school effectiveness after three years. These schools will revise and refine their instruction and assessments and develop prototypes that will be made available to other professionals committed to high standards for what students should know and be able to do. To our knowledge, this is the only teacher-led initiative on standards anywhere in the country.

The labor movement has a legacy of commitment to broader social causes, in addition to its vital role of protecting its members’ rights. Commitment to that legacy is alive and well in the Chicago Teachers Union. We believe that there is nothing more important for saving our city and our children than saving our schools. ■

Decentralization advocates create urban coalition

by Molly Dunn

A year ago, a number of school reform leaders from Chicago, Denver and Philadelphia gathered to discuss community-centered reform in large urban school systems. Since then, leaders from Seattle and New York have joined them in what has become the Cross City Campaign for School Reform.

And activists from Milwaukee, Oakland, San Francisco, Cincinnati and Toronto, Canada, are participating in some of the organization's projects.

Cross City is a unique reform organization, says Chicagoan Anne Hallett, because it sprang from grass-roots activists, includes both educators and lay people and is focusing on decentralized school reform in large cities. Its mission, she says, is "to make urban schools work for young people." Accomplishing that, she continues, requires "significant authority at the school level."

Hallett is leaving her position as director of the Wieboldt Foundation to serve full time as executive director of Cross City.

The organization is working at several levels. First, members are examining examples of successful school and community relationships in each other's cities, with an eye to improving their own local efforts.

Second, Cross City is working on citywide issues, such as how to reconfigure central offices so that they both support local initiatives and ensure equity throughout the system. The group also is looking for ways to collect and distribute data on school performance so that reformers get what they



Students at Peirce Elementary in Edgewater display 'Peirce Bucks' earned for punctuality, completing assignments and good attendance and behavior. At the end of the year, students who have 40 bucks in savings may use them to purchase items from the Peirce School Store. Funded by the Harris Bank Foundation, the program teaches banking and life skills, says Principal Janice Rosales. It was initiated by a former local school council member who is a Harris Bank executive.

need and can readily understand what they get. Good information and assessment, notes Hallett, are important components of making schools accountable to parents and citizens.

Third, Cross City seeks to shape national policies to support the efforts of large urban school systems and decentralized reform. Currently, the group is developing positions on the reauthorization (to be voted on by Congress next year) of federal Chapter 1, the largest source of federal funding for public schools, and on President Clinton's Goals 2000: Educate America Act.

While Cross City aims principally to strengthen community-based reform in member cities, participants also hope to win converts. "For me personally, I would love to see the kind of civic connection to education that reform has created in Chicago [now] expand nationwide," says Hallett. "I would like to bring my community learnings and connections from Wieboldt and apply them nationally."

Cross City is funded by the Driehaus Foundation, The Joyce Foundation, the

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Prince Charitable Trusts, Woods Charitable Fund and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, which is based in Connecticut.

Alberto-Culver offers 'jumpstarts'

To honor one of its co-founders, the Alberto-Culver Co. has created a "jumpstart" fund to bolster innovative programs in a number of areas, including education.

The Bernice E. Lavin Jumpstart Fund seeks developing programs that have shown their value but need additional support to increase their visibility and impact.

Bernice Lavin is vice president, secretary/treasurer and a director of Alberto-Culver. She started her career as assistant to the controller of a major motor products company and then

See GRANTS page 27

Grant briefs

Chicago Community Trust

■ \$30,000 to Chicago Metro History Fair for the Reason to Read program.

■ \$25,000 to the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago to support a public-opinion poll relating to the financial problems of public education in Illinois.

■ \$25,000 to National-Louis University to support its Early Childhood Leadership Training program.

Howard Hughes Medical Institute

■ \$350,000 to the Chicago Academy of Sciences for its "Science Scene: KIDS and TEENS" program for Chicago public school children living in CHA homes.



Polk Brothers Foundation

■ \$15,000 to United Neighborhood Organization of Chicago (UNO) to support an education project.

■ \$10,000 to the Latino Institute for leadership training activities of its School Reform Project.

J.D. and C.T. MacArthur

■ \$120,000 to the Teachers' Task Force for providing assistance in curriculum restructuring and "reculturing" in five Chicago public schools.

Joyce Foundation

■ \$200,000 over two years to CATALYST.

■ \$132,800 to the University of Chicago's Department of Education for a policy study on decentralization in the Chicago public schools.

■ \$100,000 to the Coalition of Essential Schools to develop a Chicago cluster of high schools that will partici-

pate in a nationwide effort to identify positive school change in urban, suburban and rural high schools.

■ \$100,000 to Roosevelt University's College of Education to implement the Chicago Academy for Leadership in Education, in cooperation with Loyola University of Chicago and Chicago public schools.

■ \$90,000 to the Chicago Panel on School Policy to help establish an equitable school funding system in Illinois and analyze school funding in Milwaukee and Cleveland.

■ \$75,000 to the Academic Development Institute to provide training for principals, teachers and parents in six Chicago public schools.

■ \$75,000 to Northwestern University's Kellogg Graduate School of Management to work with three Chicago public schools on improvement efforts.

■ \$74,500 to the University of Illinois at Chicago's College of Education for the Small Schools Workshop program.

■ \$62,500 to the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law for the Lawyers' School Reform Advisory Project.

■ \$53,950 to the Education Commission of the States to evaluate effective school reform strategies in Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

■ \$36,500 to the Chicago Urban League for research and advocacy efforts on Illinois school funding.

■ \$35,000 to the Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform.

■ \$22,350 to the University of Chicago's Department of Education for the Joyce lecture series on educational policymaking, educational research and systemic school reform.

Illinois Arts Council

■ \$11,540 to the Marwen Foundation, which provides arts education classes for Chicago public school students.



■ \$5,000 to McCosh Elementary for ArtsResource project implementation.

■ \$4,380 to Foreman High for an eight-week dance residency.

■ \$3,400 to Wisdom Bridge Theatre for school outreach.

■ \$2,500 to Walsh Elementary for a four-week theater residency.

■ \$2,400 to Cooper Elementary for an eight-week theater residency.

■ \$2,250 to Jungman Elementary for a four-week theater residency.

■ \$1,740 to LaSalle Academy for a one-month dance residency.

Fel-Pro Mecklenburger Foundation

■ \$10,000 to Arts Resources in Teaching for visual arts education program in Chicago public elementary schools.

■ \$1,500 to CATALYST.

Chicago Youth Success Foundation

■ \$40,000 to 13 Chicago public high schools to support athletic and co-curricular programs. The schools are: Austin, Bowen, Calumet, Clemente, Collins, Fenger, Hyde Park, Kelly, Lake View, Marshall, Mather and Roosevelt.

Chicago Foundation for Education

■ \$20,700 to Chicago public elementary teachers to adapt innovative teaching projects in their classrooms.

■ \$1,500 to Disney Magnet School fourth-grade team for implementation of a multicultural curriculum.

Wieboldt Foundation

■ \$25,000 over two years to Chicago Panel on School Policy.

■ \$15,000 to the special fund for LSC elections.

■ \$12,000 to Parent/Community Council for general operations and strategic planning.

■ \$12,000 to Designs for Change for general operations.

■ \$10,000 to Parents United for Responsible Education for general operations.

■ \$5,000 to the Small Schools Workshop at the University of Illinois at Chicago for general operations.

CNA Insurance

■ \$5,000 each to the Executive Service Corps, Parent/Community Council, South Austin Community Council Coalition and WSCORP for LSC election outreach activities.

American National Bank Foundation

■ \$15,000 each to Sabin Magnet and Goldblatt Elementary for a teachers training seminar on critical thinking.

Harris Trust

■ \$12,000 to Citywide Coalition for School Reform for general operations and reform efforts.

■ \$10,000 to Chicago Panel on Public School Policy for general operations.

■ \$10,000 to Designs for Change for its Chicago Schoolwatch Program.

■ \$2,500 to Esperanza Community Services for five special education programs.

■ \$1,000 to Chicago Public Schools for support of participants in the annual student science fair.

GATX Corp.

■ \$10,000 to Executive Service Corps for reform efforts on the Near West Side.

Grants is a cooperative project of CATALYST and the Donors Forum of Chicago.

Legislature tells Finance Authority, focus on money, forget reform

by Linda Lenz

When the Legislature finally did its part to keep schools open, it took the School Finance Authority out of the reform business and shoved it toward greater financial oversight.

Legislators repealed sections of the School Reform Act requiring the School Board to submit systemwide reform plans to the Finance Authority for approval. At the same time, they directed the Authority to conduct a number of investigations, such as management audits, that previously had been only options.

"The Finance Authority had been set up to be just that, a finance authority," explains Mark Gordon, spokesperson for Sen. James "Pate" Philip, president of the Senate. "Then they were given some reform powers they did not want and did not think were in their purview."

Until Martin "Mike" Koldyke became Finance Authority chair in 1992, the body showed little interest in its reform duties. Under Koldyke, the Authority forced the School Board to make some changes—for example, shifting control over \$500,000 in teacher development funds to local schools—but an outside evaluation conducted for the Authority said the board's systemwide plan had not accomplished much.

"I wouldn't give them a total 'F.' They didn't do as well as they could have, but they got things started," says Joan Jeter Slay of the reform group Designs for Change, which had repeatedly petitioned the Authority to take a tougher stand. Slay says that eliminating the reform duties is "unfortunate."

However, James R. Compton, presi-

dent of the Chicago Urban League, says that dropping the Authority's reform tasks "is probably a good move" since members don't have the appropriate expertise. (Until recently, they all were lawyers, financiers or businesspersons.) Indeed, Compton questions having *any* oversight body, arguing that the Illinois State Board of Education and the Legislature could fulfill that role.

The Finance Authority's now-defunct role in school reform represented a political compromise. As the Reform Act was being hammered out in 1988, business leaders and some reform groups lobbied for an oversight panel because they didn't trust the Board of Education to carry out reform. However, there were strong objections in the African-American community to creation of a "super School Board." Finally, both sides agreed to expand the Finance Authority's duties to include reform oversight.

Last month, legislators talked about transferring this duty to the Illinois State Board of Education, but, in the end, they simply took the Finance Authority out of the picture, leaving the School Board on its own.

Here are other details of the legislation passed Nov. 14 to keep schools open. Days earlier, a U.S. Appellate Court panel shut down the school system, ruling that District Court Judge Charles P. Korcoras had stepped out of his jurisdiction in keeping schools open.

Deficit reduction

■ **BONDS** The School Finance Authority may sell up to \$427 million in bonds, giving \$175 million in proceeds to the school system this school

Test scores rise

Test scores in reading and math for Chicago's elementary schools rose across the board this year, marking their most consistent improvement since the beginning of reform in 1989. In the three grades tested in the Illinois Goals Assessment Program (IGAP), only third-grade reading scores dropped. Despite the improvement, Chicago schools still fall far short of state averages.

Chicago's IGAP scores

Reading			
Year	3rd Gr.	6th Gr.	8th Gr.
'89	189	196	212
'90	198	196	212
'91	180	198	210
'92	170	179	200
'93	154	184	206

Math			
Year	3rd Gr.	6th Gr.	8th Gr.
'89	188	186	197
'90	176	192	192
'91	174	192	191
'92	167	185	187
'93	187	192	204

State IGAP scores '93

	3rd Gr.	6th Gr.	8th Gr.
Reading	245	259	258
Math	268	257	266

year, \$203 million next school year and the remainder to pay the first two years' interest and other costs. Beginning in 1995, the Authority's tax rate would rise to make the bond payments, and the School Board's tax rate would fall by the same amount.

■ **RESERVE CALCULATION** The Authority's so-called reserve calculation, aimed at preventing the board from spending money it doesn't yet have, was reduced to \$100 million, the effect of which was

to trim another \$17 million from the deficit. Significantly, the reduction is permanent, meaning the Authority cannot require the board to "pay back" this or previous reductions.

■ **CHAPTER 1** Schools will see the scheduled increase in their state Chapter 1 money reduced by \$16 million this year and next year. That means they will get only an additional \$18.6 million this year, bringing the total to roughly \$923 per low-income pupil, instead of \$973 per low-income pupil.

■ **EARLY RETIREMENT** School employees will have a second opportunity to apply for early retirement; the deadline is March 1, giving schools time to plan adjustments. Estimated savings are \$4 million for 1994-95.

■ **UTILITY REFUNDS** Apparently in anticipation of \$3.8 million in credits from Commonwealth Edison (which was found to have overcharged customers), the Legislature gave the board the authority to use utility refunds and credits any way it wants.

School Finance Authority

■ **INSPECTOR GENERAL** It must hire an independent inspector general, for a four-year term, to "conduct investigations into allegations or incidents of waste, fraud and financial mismanagement." As an operating expense of the Authority, this post will be paid from the board's state aid.

■ **FINANCIAL PLANS** The board again must submit a financial plan to the Authority, but for two years instead of three. The Authority must find the plan "reasonably capable of being achieved" before it can approve the board's budget. The effect is to deter the board from signing multi-year employee contracts when the money isn't in sight.

■ **STAFFING PLANS** The board must submit a staffing plan, which the Authority also must approve before voting on the board's budget. "The hiring or appointment of any person shall not be binding on the board unless and until it is in compliance with [the plan]."

■ **SPECIAL ED, SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION** Before April 1, the Authority must determine whether money could be saved by reorganizing special education services and by consolidating schools; then, it must make recommendations to the board. If the board doesn't follow

them, it must convince the Authority that it has good reason—or risk having the Authority reject its 1994-95 budget.

■ **MANAGEMENT AUDIT** At least once every two years, the Authority must conduct a management audit that reviews "the personnel, organization, contracts, leases and physical properties of the board to determine whether the board is managing and utilizing its resources in an economical and efficient manner."

■ **PROVISIONAL BUDGET** The Authority may approve a "provisional" budget to open schools pending adoption of a final, balanced budget.

Local School Councils

■ **TEACHER VACANCIES** Teacher vacancies will be filled in the same manner as the initial selection of teacher members, by appointment of the School Board following an advisory poll of school staff. Previously, councils themselves filled these vacancies.

■ **CONFLICT OF INTEREST** Members are now subject to state conflict-of-interest laws. Failure to comply with the board's conflict-of-interest and economic-disclosure rules is grounds for removal from the council.

■ **PARENT MEMBERS** A parent member whose child graduates or transfers voluntarily to another school loses membership and voting rights on the day the child graduates or leaves the school.

Teachers

■ **RESERVE TEACHERS** The law incorporates the language of the new Chicago Teachers Union contract giving the board the authority to assign a reserve teacher to a vacant position on an interim basis and to make a permanent assignment if the position has been vacant for at least 60 school days.

A reserve teacher who does not hold the proper credentials for any vacancy has 20 school months to get certification in "an area of systemic need, as identified by the Board of Education." If, after an additional five months, there is no position for which that person is credentialed, he or she is honorably terminated. As with previous legislation, no teacher with an unsatisfactory rating may become a reserve teacher.

Principals

■ When there is a principal vacancy, the LSC may fill it for only the unexpired term of the contract.

■ Principals may determine when their buildings are open.

■ Principals may approve contracts up to \$10,000 with local school council approval. Previously, they had no power to approve contracts.

■ Beginning Sept. 1, 1995, the principal needs the support of only 51 percent of faculty, teacher aides and other members of the teachers' bargaining unit at his or her school to waive a provision of the teachers contract. Until then, 63.5 percent is required, as in the new teachers' contract. Provisions dealing with compensation may not be waived.

■ Chief engineers and food service managers are responsible for work in their areas but "shall be under the general supervision" of principals. If a chief engineer or food service manager "reasonably believes" that a principal's order may require him or her to violate a contract, rule or law, he or she may appeal to his or her superior in central office, "whose decision shall be final." This reflects new contract language.

Previously, engineers and food service managers who believed orders were "unreasonable" could appeal to subdistrict superintendents.

Miscellaneous

■ **DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS** The general superintendent now has the authority to evaluate subdistrict superintendents, who need a satisfactory evaluation to have their contracts renewed. The board will set guidelines for the evaluation. Previously, the general superintendent had no role in contract renewal.

■ **TAX REFERENDUM** The board was given the authority to hold a special election between Jan. 1 and May 31, 1995 to increase property taxes; if the board doesn't do that, the City Council can call a special election before July 1, 1995. Normally, tax referenda are held during regular elections. The effect of the new legislation is to require any action during Mayor Richard M. Daley's anticipated re-election campaign. ■

Dan Weissmann contributed to this story.



JOHN BOOZ

Corliss Austin picks up her son Anthony Bennet at South Loop Branch School on the first day after the school financial crisis was resolved. Blaming politicians, she said, "If it had to do with their children or something that would get them re-elected, it would have already been solved."

STANDARDS

continued from page 1

"But you've got to start somewhere," says John Kotsakis, assistant to the president for educational affairs at the CTU. Kotsakis is a co-chair of the project, which officially began last June. He sees the standards as the centerpiece of the school-change puzzle. The standards could become a component of the school improvement planning required of each school under the Reform Act, which mandates a common core curriculum for all schools, with flexibility at the school level for implementation.

"Local school councils will be required to establish goals for their schools based upon the new standards," says outgoing Deputy Supt. Adrienne Bailey, a driving force behind the project. "The goals are realistic and achievable and are based on student strengths. They represent a break from the view of students as 'deficits,' and they represent a multicultural and diverse world."

As an example, Bailey points to one of the language arts goals: to use language, including the student's *home language*, to generate topics, ideas and works that incorporate personal, community and world interests of the stu-

dent. "The idea of seeing a student with a non-English-speaking base as an asset is a break from the old way of looking at standards," says Bailey.

"Standards will give a nudge toward alternative assessment," says Kotsakis, "and I guarantee you that if teachers start teaching with a clear set of expectations in mind, scores will go up no matter what type of assessment is used."

"Draft standards" will appear in the form of a rainbow-colored wall poster listing learning-outcome standards expected of all students in six subject areas at grades 4, 8 and 11. The subject areas are: biological and physical sciences, fine arts, physical development and health, mathematics, social sciences and language arts. The learning outcomes are specific statements of what students should know and be able to do and were written to align with the State Goals for Learning and the Illinois Public School Accreditation Process.

The standards poster has the look of a finished product with the word "draft" printed faintly in the background. Indeed, in their accompanying joint statement on the standards, Supt. Argie Johnson and CTU President Jacqueline Vaughn say, "The document is a draft. It is not carved in stone. We hope that teachers and administrators, parents and community members, business and

4th-grade sample

Here are proposed standards for fourth-grade language arts:

- Interpret, analyze and critique the literal and non-literal messages in oral and written texts that represent different cultures.

- Appraise the work of self and others and reassess one's own thinking, speaking and writing, using new understandings.

- Speak and write using standard conventions in a well-organized and coherent manner appropriate to a variety of audiences and purposes.

- Write narrative, descriptive, expository and persuasive material for different purposes and audiences, using all stages of the writing process.

- Communicate by speaking effectively in formal and informal settings to provide and obtain information, using verbal and non-verbal cues.

- Construct meaning of unfamiliar words and ideas from oral and written texts, using a variety of strategies and resources.

- Read, comprehend, evaluate and interpret genre representing literature of various cultures, eras and ideas.

- Listen actively, critically and analytically for a variety of purposes.

- Read and write for various purposes, including recreation and enrichment.

- Use technology as a tool for communication and investigation.

- Use language, including home language, to generate topics, ideas and works of personal, community and world interest.

professional people will ask: Is this what we want for Chicago students?"

Notwithstanding the insistence from project leaders that the poster is only a discussion document, just how input from below will be organized is not clear. In a November meeting of the project's advisory panel, Bailey pushed the idea of "town hall meetings" around the poster, but few members expressed enthusiasm for the idea.

The new standards are the product of a series of collaborations, led by Kotsakis, Bailey and Deborah Walsh of the CTU

Quest Center. Among those taking part in drafting the standards were the Joyce and MacArthur foundations, local university administrators and faculty, several school reform groups and community organizations and some 30 teachers. "They finally got it right," says Bruce McPherson, a project member and education professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He applauds the broad-based input drawn by Bailey and the School Board and the unity effort between the board and the CTU.

One of the teachers taking part was Lynn Cherkasky-Davis, the lead teacher at Foundations School, a school-within-a-school at Price Elementary. "Ordinarily, I and many other teachers would have looked at this as just another

piece of paper coming from Pershing Road," she says. "But these standards were developed by teachers, and they support an interdisciplinary approach to teaching, which I support." Cherkasky-Davis praised the standards, calling them "a portrait of what an educated citizen should look like, rather than prescription or some new form of mastery learning."

Private foundations put up about \$350,000 to support the project. The Council for Basic Education, which has been in the forefront of lobbying for national standards, helped initiate the project's design. (The Washington, D.C.-based group's 1991 poster entitled "Standards: A Vision for Learning" served as a model for the Chicago version.) Council President Graham Down

came to Chicago to help create a suitable format for Chicago. "In many ways, Chicago is a national prototype," says Down. "Chicago's progress is being looked at in cities like Cleveland and Jackson [Mississippi] where the Joyce and Exxon foundations are considering funding similar projects."

However, even though the new standards are tied to state goals and objectives, and even though the Illinois State Board of Education is pushing for the development of alternative assessments, the Iowa tests still drive much of the school curriculum in Chicago. While the new standards are geared to higher-order thinking and to application of knowledge, current standardized tests measure primarily a student's ability to memorize blocks of facts and information.

Take, for example, the proposed eighth-grade social sciences standard that requires students to "exhibit an understanding of economic principles as an informed consumer." Skeptics wonder how such an understanding can be measured by today's tests.

How can standards work if schools are judged by test results that don't correspond to the standards? This is a sticky question in the minds of many teachers and principals. A recent central office document entitled "Selected Roles and Responsibilities of the Board and the General Superintendent" calls on all schools to show "one-year gain" on the Iowa tests for each year of instruction. This emphasis on standardized tests troubles many on the project's advisory panel.

Down, of the Council for Basic Education, claims, "The council has always been opposed to multiple-choice tests as measurements of achievement. The [new] standards call for higher-order and critical-thinking abilities which aren't measurable using these kinds of tests."

Donald Moore, a Standards Project advisor and executive director of the reform group Designs for Change, wants teachers to be freed from the pressure of having to prepare their kids for the Iowa tests next spring so they can concentrate on meeting the new standards. "If schools are going to be judged by the Iowas," argues Moore, "they are going to teach to the Iowas—not to the standards." He advocates making the Iowa tests voluntary

Vermont's portfolio assessment still struggling after five years

Portfolio assessment—that is, judging students by a collection of their work—still has a long way to go before it proves itself to be the alternative to standardized testing that many school reformers want it to be.

In Vermont, where the first statewide portfolio assessment program has been in place for five years, serious problems of subjectivity and "rater reliability" were revealed in a 1992 report by the RAND Corporation.

In a new report released in November, RAND researchers show an improvement in mathematics assessment, but find that different scorers were still far apart in rating writing skills; the researchers called on the state to overhaul that part of the assessment system.

Created in 1988, Vermont's portfolio assessment system has drawn national attention at a time when many states, including Illinois, are considering alternatives to traditional multiple-choice tests. Unlike traditional tests, which are scored by computers, portfolios are evaluated by teachers, sometimes along with standardized tests that are not restricted to multiple-choice questions.

In writing, for example, teachers evaluate work samples for purpose, organization, detail, voice or tone, grammar, usage and mechanics.

Scores range from 1.00 to 4.00 with, for instance, writing that "rarely" establishes a clear purpose getting a score of 1.00.

The RAND study found, however, that raters varied widely in their opinions of written work and that their reliability was "low by any standards." RAND's Daniel Koretz, the primary author of the study, says that improved reliability in math came about in part because much of the scoring was conducted at a single site over five days. Raters also participated in calibration sessions twice a day in which they rated prescored pieces and discussed disagreements.

But the strategy did not work for writing. Among the difficulties for the raters was the range of written samples, which included poems, short stories and personal narratives—three very different genres—and the use of scoring methods that were not specific to each genre. The RAND report says part of the assessment could be improved by making the methods simpler and more specific or by narrowing the range of writing samples.

"One of the problems of the reform movement, outside of Vermont," Koretz told *Education Week* (Nov. 11), "is that the public and the policy world are developing unrealistic expectations of how long it will take these things to work." M.K.



LSC candidate Alex Lyons (right) campaigns outside Hefferan School for a community representative position.

Voter turnout, LSC elections

	1993*	1991	1989
ELEMENTARY			
Parent and community	50,716	67,167	160,699
Staff	20,522	21,299	25,359
HIGH SCHOOL			
Parent and community	9,453	12,585	32,072
Staff	5,391	6,489	9,522
Student	45,716	53,549	66,561
Total	131,798	161,089	294,213

* Results are from 521 of 542 schools. Source: Board of Education.

this spring and letting schools experiment with their own local forms of assessment that measure ways in which the new standards are being fulfilled.

Kotsakis doesn't think this will happen because of the pressure from politicians like State Senator James "Pate" Philip (R-Wood Dale) and pro-Iowa tests researchers like Prof. Herb Walberg of the University of Illinois at Chicago, both of whom promote standardized tests as the best means of holding Chicago schools accountable. Philip and Republican legislators have been demanding improvement in test scores as a condition for increased funding of Chicago schools.

Walberg recognizes that problems exist in current standardized assessment but argues that many forms of alternative assessment are worse. "I'm a moderate on this question and am for both kinds of tests," concludes Walberg, who supports the Chicago Learning Outcome Standards Project and has worked on similar projects nationally. "It is important that students do writing and problem solving. But I don't favor these as ways of assessing the education system because there is too much subjectivity involved."

Walberg offers the example of Vermont, where the nation's first statewide portfolio-assessment program was launched five years ago. He cites studies that found the portfolio assessments in writing to be unreliable, because different scorers gave different rankings to the same work.

Kotsakis and Bailey both see the new standards as a basis from which to push for alternative assessments. The School Board will adopt a new program of assessment in February, according to

Bailey. But it may take a year before it is implemented. "We are already speaking with the academic experts on assessment to see if we can begin to develop a test that is geared to the standards," says Kotsakis.

Both Bailey and Kotsakis recognize the obvious problem of issuing new standards in the wake of a debilitating, three-month financial crisis. "But what choices do we have?" asks Bailey, who was scheduled to leave her post at the end of November. She hopes that the new standards will be a basis for struggle for the resources needed to keep the system afloat. But Bailey also points out that the standards were designed with the crisis in mind. "We developed them to be very student-based and not as some gigantic pie-in-the-sky goals that would not be achievable in a crisis-ridden system." ■

GRANTS

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joined her husband, Leonard, when he acquired Alberto-Culver in 1955. At the time, Alberto-Culver was a small, regional company; today, it generates more than \$1 billion in annual sales in more than 100 countries.

The Jumpstart Fund plans to grant \$500,000 to \$750,000 in its first year. Five education-related programs already have received funding:

■ Boys and Girls Club of Chicago received \$30,000 for a new College Bound Program Initiative, which will provide information, motivation, development and opportunity for club members who aspire to further their education.

■ *CATALYST* received \$15,000 for a campaign to increase readership among local leadership groups.

■ Lawndale Christian Development Corp. received \$10,000 for a new partnership with the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship, a program based on the premise that inner-city youth have extraordinary potential for business success and possess qualifications characteristic of successful entrepreneurs: mental toughness, ability to take risks, resiliency and natural sales ability.

■ Soul Children of Chicago received \$12,500 to provide scholarships for choir members continuing their musical education at institutions of higher learning.

■ YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago received \$25,000 to expand a two-year-old program that engages children ages 6 to 14 in math, science and technology activities.

The Jumpstart Fund also supports career development and health initiatives that offer either direct assistance or the dissemination of information to benefit women and their children.

Send inquiries and suggestions to Bernice E. Lavin Jumpstart Fund, The Alberto-Culver Co., 2525 Armitage Ave., Melrose Park, Ill. 60160, attention Daniel B. Stone, vice president, corporate communications. ■

CATALYST welcomes guest editorials and letters to the editor. Send them to *CATALYST/Opinions*, 332 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 500, Chicago, Ill. 60604. They may be edited for clarity and space.

Bright Ideas

Children learn ecology of Englewood

For the past two years, seventh-graders at Bass Elementary School in Englewood have signed a "Green Earth Pledge" to learn about the ecology of their community and educate their neighbors about protecting the environment.

With samples collected from their homes, children have tested soil for acid, phosphorous and nitrogen, and tested water for acid. They have put "sticky" boards outside their homes to collect air contaminants.

Last year's results showed that the quality of neighborhood soil, water and air were "not that bad," compared to national levels, reports teacher Brian Klaf, who launched the program with a grant from the Chicago Foundation for Education. This year's testing is still going on.

Even so, children found that refuse pollution is a big problem, with abandoned cars, drug paraphernalia, soiled diapers, bottles, cans and cigarette butts littering the area. Missing, they noted, were shrubs, trees and plant life.

"They understand that we need plants and plants need us to survive," says sev-



Science teacher Brian Klaf shows his class how to measure chemical content of soil samples.

enth-grade teacher Clothilde Bennett.

Bennett says children in the program are learning more about ecology than they would have if they had only read about it. "Hands-on anything makes it a part of them," she explains. "Get them totally involved in it, and they'll never forget it."

The students are enthusiastic about the program, too. As Antonio Wiggins and

Deandre Beoh recently performed a soil test, their classmates watched with anticipation as a solution changed colors, indicating the level of phosphorous. Antonio said he's learned about the importance of environmental issues, "especially pollution."

This year, students plan to distribute information packets to community residents—last year, the program started

late, and there wasn't time. The packets will include test results as well as information about larger ecological issues like ozone depletion and acid rain. Students also plan to gather information from local businesses about their waste management programs, and then pass it along to community residents.

And they plan to send advice to Mayor Richard M. Daley, Gov. Jim Edgar and Vice President Al Gore, inviting Gore to visit the school.

City kids, says teacher Klaf, often do not know the impact of environmental issues on their neighborhoods and, unlike suburban kids, are not exposed to extensive recycling programs. "I don't think the nation as a whole has really looked at the inner city," he says.

Klaf wants to spread the word, but his message is to start locally. "Don't worry now about the world; worry about your own home," he advises. "Then you can fix the next block, then the next block, then the city, then the state, then the nation and then the world."

Laura Doyle

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