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A CASE STUDY OF CLOSING SCHOOLS IN A LARGE METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT EXPERIENCING DECLINING ENROLLMENT

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GRADUATE COLLEGE

A CASE STUDY OF CLOSING SCHOOLS IN A LARGE METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT EXPERIENCING DECLINING ENROLLMENT

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

IN GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

By

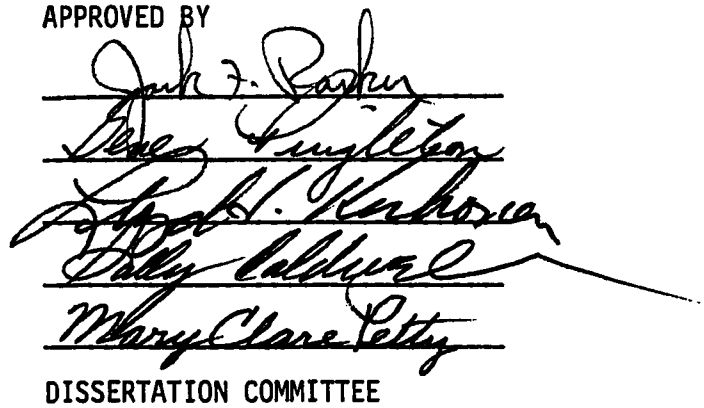
LARRY DEAN WEBBER

Norman, Oklahoma

1983

A CASE STUDY OF CLOSING SCHOOLS IN A LARGE METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT EXPERIENCING DECLINING ENROLLMENT

APPROVED BY



DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

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A CASE STUDY OF CLOSING SCHOOLS IN A LARGE METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT EXPERIENCING DECLINING ENROLLMENT

CHAPTER I

PURPOSE OF STUDY

Introduction

Demographic shifts, a sharp drop in the birth rate, the flight of young, middle-class people to suburbia's outer areas, and localized migration within and between districts, have produced a national trend toward decline in public school enrollment and the crises of decline in many school districts. The phenomenon of declining enrollment will most likely have a greater impact on education in the next decade than any other foreseeable trend. In the mid-1960s, demographers began predicting smaller enrollments in the public schools of the United States, but education administrators who had been faced with rising enrollments, crowded and outmoded facilities and teacher shortages were skeptical.

From 1950 to 1970, elementary school enrollment grew from 22 million to 37 million, while secondary school enrollment more than doubled from 6.5 million to nearly 15 million.[1] To cope with this growth the

[1]National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Educational Statistics, (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1975) Table 3.

instructional and administrative staffs were increased and new elementary and secondary schools were built rapidly. The time of rapid growth created an expanionist attitude that lasted long past the time when demographic signs indicated that growth was slowing.

In 1969-1970, elementary enrollments began to decline. Today, all but a few rapidly growing suburbs have experienced some loss of enrollment and public schools are struggling to adjust to this new reality. Nearly every state (39 out of 50) is faced with enrollment decline (see Table 1). The number of students enrolled in the nation's public elementary and secondary schools dropped from 45,903,000 to 44,700,000, a decline of 1,203,000 or three percent, between the 1970-1971 abd 1975-1976 school years.[2] According to all reasonable projections, enrollments are expected to decline further until the mid-1980s (see Table 2).

The principal cause of this reversal in enrollment trends is the sharp decrease in the number of births which began in the early 1960s. Despite the record number of women of childbearing age in the United States today, the number of births per year dropped from 4,274,000 in the late 1950s to 3,126,000 in 1976.[3] According to the United States Census Bureau, the young women of today not only are having smaller families but are also having their family at a later age.

Enrollments for the nation as a whole, at least in the K-12 level, can be predicted into the 1980s as most of the births that form the basis for this enrollment have already occurred. Table 3 contains

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[2]Education Commission of the States, The Fiscal Impact of Declining Enrollments, (Denver, Colorado, 1978), p. 1.

[3]"Can Instructional Quality be Preserved as Enrollments Decline?", Dr. Paul McCloud, (OASCD, April, 1978), p. 1.

enrollment projection information from the HEW publication, Projections of Education Statistics to 1984-1985, published in 1976. Enrollments in the elementary grades (K-8) were projected to decline 16 percent between years 1969-1982. The secondary school enrollments are expected to decline about 15 percent from 1976 to 1984.

While public school enrollments have been declining nationally about one percent per year, in large cities enrollments have declined three percent per year or more. During the period from 1971 to 1976, enrollment in all public schools in the United States shrank by four percent. In contrast, Detroit lost 16 percent; Dallas, 19 percent; Montgomery County, Maryland, seven percent; Columbus, Ohio, 11 percent; San Francisco, 17 percent; Tulsa, Oklahoma, 18 percent; and St. Louis, Missouri, 23 percent.[4] Table 4 contains information showing the impact of the enrollment decline in 28 of the large school districts. In almost all of these districts, the losses were largely the children of young, affluent white families, leaving behind in the city an increasing proportion of deprived minority pupils with grave educational needs.

Need for the Study

In a country where bigger has always meant better, decline is a difficult situation. Decline is failure in too many minds both within and outside the educational profession. Communities and school administrators faced with decline have little enthusiasm for dealing with the issue. However, those who have met the issue with constructive solutions have found that decline is not entirely negative in its results.

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[4] Declining Enrollment, The Scope of the Problem, (National School Public Relations Association, 1976), p. 9.

A review of recent literature on declining enrollment suggested that a district experiencing a decline in enrollment might anticipate problems in the following areas:

Financial - Reduced federal funding for special programs, reduced state appropriations based on average daily attendance, reduced local tax base. Increased costs will accrue from a high pupil--teacher ratio, facility/maintenance-pupil ratio, increased need for or use of transportation.

Space - Excess buildings, excess rooms in yet needed buildings, excess space/land purchased for pre-decline additions. Plans for coping with decline may suggest a need for new facilities if a more centralized school seems desirable or if hard-pressed districts decide to consolidate.

Manpower - Oversupply of teachers, inability/unwillingness of other districts to absorb unneeded teachers, contract agreements making reductions in force either difficult or impossible, "last hired, first fired" policies disrupting the racial or program balance of the staff and demands for wage increases despite reduced tax appropriations.

Social - Disruption of community because of school closure, parent unwillingness to send children farther to school, inability of taxpayers to understand increasing costs despite lower enrollment, loss of school board support due to district boundary changes, or community disappointment with school management because of declining enrollment.[5]

It would seem that the enrollment of fewer students would mean less need for classroom space. That leads to a number of questions. Should schools be closed? Would closure save money? Which schools should be closed? How are teachers shifted? What about community opposition? Eventually, however, enrollment decline reaches the point at which the only logical solution is to close one or more schools.

By 1982 Seattle had closed six schools, Santa Clara, California closed four schools in 1977, and Tulsa closed nine from 1977 to 1980.

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[5]National School Board Association, Research Report, No. 1976-1, "Declining Enrollment," p. 4.

Salt Lake City has closed 23 since 1959, Evanston, Illinois closed four schools in 1976-1977, Monroe County, Indiana closed three schools in 1974-1975, and Montgomery County, Maryland closed five schools from 1972-1977.

In a recent study by Henry Fisher, data were gathered from 50 school districts from 18 states of the region served by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. All fifty districts had closed elementary schools and 15 had closed junior high schools and two had closed senior high schools. His conclusions were as follows:

1. School closings as a result of declining enrollment have been an important concern for administrators during the past five years, and based on the increase in the number of closures during the past two years and national enrollment projections, the concern will become more serious between the present time and the early 1980s.

2. Schools to be closed are more likely to be selected because of the extent to which their enrollment decline exceeds the average decline for the district, and because they are operating in older facilities.

3. Methods of communication and involvement which reach a large number of people, such as the use of surveys and newsletters, are more likely to lower resistance to the closing than is the use of a select group of people serving on an advisory committee.

4. In view of the fact that most districts projected a cost savings as a result of the school closing, and the fact that a cost--benefit analysis was more likely to have been done in the higher resistance districts, it seems apparent that financial concerns are a major factor in school closings, but the promise of savings will not offset other concerns related to the closure decision.

5. The development of plans, including objectives to be achieved, transitional plans, and long-range plans, are a common part of the total closing process, but usually are not initiated more than two years before the actual closing of the school.

6. Parents and students of the closed school are the groups most likely to oppose the closing, and their attitudes and concerns

should be especially important to those involved in the decisions related to the closing process.

7. Unanimous support of the board of education is important to the development and maintenance of support for the closure decision.

8. Despite the resistance encountered, most superintendents who have experienced school closure believe the closing of a school has no negative impact on their districts and would not hesitate to recommend such action again if similar situations exist.[6]

In this study of districts experiencing school closings, approximately 31 percent of the administrators said they would begin to study and plan sooner if faced with the possibility of closing other schools.[7] The decision to close schools will, however, have significant effects on the school systems and the communities involved. The effects will differ from one community to another, depending on the characteristics of each area. Communities with a plan are more successful in closing schools than are those who do no pre-planning.

The development of the operational model to assist large city administrators in arriving at a logical plan for closing schools due to declining enrollment should be a meaningful contribution to the literature of school administration. It should also be a useful tool for those large school district administrators and metropolitan communities faced with declining enrollment and school closure.

Statement of Problem

This study was designed to develop a model for school closing in large metropolitan districts. Questions to which the model would be

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[6]Henry Fisher, Study of School Closings, (February, 1979), pp. 135-7.

[7]Ibid., p. 135.

responsive would include the following:

1. What are criteria for closing schools in large metropolitan districts?
2. What procedure should be used in closing schools?
3. Who is involved in closing schools?

Procedure

The first phase of the study involved a review of the literature relating to the declining enrollment problem and school closings. The second phase involved case studies of three cities - Seattle, Washington, Salt Lake City, Utah, and Tulsa, Oklahoma.

On the basis of the literature review and the case studies, a model was developed which included:

1. Criteria for school closing.
2. Procedures for closing schools.
3. Participants involved in the closing of schools.

The development of the model was organized around the essential components identified from the literature and from the experiences of the three school districts studied. The inclusion, rejection, or modification of components of the model was determined by using general theories related to school administration, and by selecting the most frequently used successful criteria and procedures from the three case studies.

As a part of the study, the model was tested by applying it to the closing of two schools. Conclusions were then developed relating to the model's applicability in the more general sense.

Organization of the Study

The report of the study was organized as follows:

Chapter I includes the Introduction, Need for the Study, Statement of the Problem, Procedures, and Organization of the Study.

Chapter II was a review of the literature related to the study.

Chapter III was a review of the plans and methods used for school closings in three metropolitan school districts.

Chapter IV was the development of a model for school closing in a large metropolitan school district.

Chapter V described the application of the model to the closing of two schools.

Chapter VI included the summary, conclusion, and recommendations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter the existing literature on declining enrollment and school closure was reviewed. The review was organized into four sections: Introduction, The Politics of Decline, The Management of Decline, and Planning for School Closure.

After a quarter of a century of rapid growth, an increasing number of school systems are finding themselves faced with shrinking enrollments. The problems have changed from struggling to cope with overcrowding, double sections, temporary facilities and new construction, to what to do with empty classrooms.

When shrinkage first occurs, superintendents tend to allocate freed-up classroom space to curriculum enrichment. That might mean space for art, music, science, and school libraries or expansion to audio-visual or media centers and the addition of new programs such as those for the gifted. Decisions about these kinds of programs are easy. But when all the enrichment and administrative easing has been done that is possible within fiscal limits, and there are still empty classrooms, positive action must be taken to close schools.

Closing a school, many educators agree, is one of the most difficult situations an administrator can face. From 1972 to 1982, school

officials in 25 of the largest districts have closed approximately 700 schools. Chicago is in the lead with 101 schools, New York City with 70 schools, St. Louis with 59 schools, Cleveland with 51 schools, and Columbus with 49.[9] Between March, 1982 and May, 1983, Columbus has decided to close 13 schools; Montgomery County, Maryland, 14 schools; Minneapolis, 18 schools; and Detroit, Michigan, 19 schools. While the rate of elementary school closings has peaked, the closing of secondary schools has just begun.

Total school enrollment in the United States peaked in 1970-1971 at 51.3 million pupils.[10] Since 1971-1972, public school enrollment has been declining at a rate of eight percent. Enrollment peaked during the 1971-1972 school year at the elementary school level and at the secondary level during the 1975-1976 school year.[11] Although enrollment decline has affected nearly every school system throughout the country, it is generally greatest in the inner-city schools.[12] More recent school closings have caused the clamor to increase as declining enrollments have affected larger districts and greater numbers of people.[13] According to the report by the National Committee for Citizens in Education, 1981,

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[9]Education Week, Vol. I, No. 26, (March 24, 1982), p. 1.

[10]National Center for Education Statistics, Projections of Statistics to 1986-1987, (Washington, D.C., 1978), p. 18.

[11]M. J. McPherrin, A Case Study of Declining Enrollment in a Large Suburban School District, (Education Department, Northern Illinois University, 1979), pp. 7-8.

[12]John F. Faust, The Social and Political Factors Affecting the Closing of Schools in a Period of Declining Enrollments in a Large Urban School System, (Education Department, University of Cincinnati, 1976), p. 11.

[13]Ibid., p. 34.

the crisis in closing schools stems from:

1. Lack of sufficient warning that major changes are coming.
2. Denial or disbelief that changes will really happen.
3. Lack of citizen involvement until a solution is proposed.
4. Lack of ground rules for closing schools, inconsistent application of ground rules, or disagreement of the appropriate ground rules.
5. Announcement of immediate closings with no time to react objectively.
6. Citizens disbelief that closing schools will improve educational programs and opportunities for district children.[14]

The Politics of Decline

The management of decline is not simply a technical problem. It is also a political problem. Keough says declining management will challenge the most able administrator.[15] As Rogers argued, the assumpthat presumable "technical" educational decisions are apolitical is unfounded since all administrative decisions are based on assumptions of value, involve priorities and involve conceptions of alternative costs. School officials operate in what students of administration call "zones of acceptance" or "conceptions of legitimacy." Any plans they make for changes in the school system, like school closings, are affected by the actions and attitudes of many constituencies, from professional groups inside the school system to community groups, real estate interests, and so on. Thus says Rogers:

> An explanation of public education decisions such as we're doing what is educationally right and that's the only consideration fails to describe how such decisions are made. Though such

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[14] School Closings and Declining Enrollment, Education Facilities Labs, Incorporated, New York, N.Y., National Committee for Citizens in Education, (Columbia, Maryland, 1981), p. 3.

[15] Diane Divoky, "Burden of the Seventies - The Management of Decline," 1981, Phi Delta Kappan, p. 88.

statements may be necessary for public relations purposes, they obviously cannot be used as substitutes for political realities.[16]

Iannaccone pointed out that the declining enrollment problem is a political conflict management one, a policy process problem, not a traditional organizational specialist area even though it requires specialized technical inputs. The sequence of first technical and then political inputs will not work if the actors involved become wedded to the implied technical solutions even though they subsequently go through the charade of receiving political inputs. This may be a particularly difficult lesson to learn for technically well-trained educational professional managers unaccustomed to the management of public political conflict.[17]

Management of Decline

The change from growth to decline in school districts has created unfamiliar and difficult problems for educational decision makers. Declining enrollments and dwindling revenues have forced school administrators to recognize that decline is no longer necessarily a sign of managerial failure. Glassberg suggested that managers may enhance their reputations by implementing cutbacks as well as administering overgrowth.[18]

Administrators in the first of the 1970s named themselves managers of decline but are now thinking of themselves more positively

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[16]David Rogers, 110 Livingston Street: Politics and Bureaucracy in the New York City Schools, (New York, Random House, 1968), p. 5.

[17]L. Iannaccone, "The Management of Decline: Implications for our Knowledge in Politics and Education." 1979, Education and Urban Society, 11: 420 and 421.

[18]Andrew Glassberg, "Organizational Responses to Municipal Budget Decreases," (Public Administration Review, 1978), July-August: 329.

as managers of change or reorganizers of education.[19] As Thomas sees it: "A school closing carries with it the hope that educational opportunities can be improved in the midst of conflict, confrontation and consolidation."[20] Cuban argues that it provides an opportunity for review and reevaluation of present programs and facilities as well as for serious long-range planning for the future.[21]

For school administrators faced with the task of closing schools, the job seems to be one of building a case strong enough to maintain public support and still make the necessary consolidation. Thomas stated that what may be effective in one community may not be effective in another, but that decisions must be made about:

1. The use of citizens committees
2. The use of local consultants
3. The use of outside consultants
4. The preparation of demographics
5. The use of staff personnel
6. The use of community surveys
7. The release of information
8. The involvement of the media[22]

Thomas further indicated that the following leadership qualities are necessary for effective school closures:

1. Ability to listen
2. Ability to synthesize

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[19]Ben Brodinsky, Declining Enrollment - Closing Schools, Problems and Solutions, Critical Issues Report and American Association of School Administrators, (Arlington, Virginia, 1981), p. 80.

[20]Donald Thomas, Administrative Leadership in School Closures, (National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 1980), 64: p. 21.

[21]Larry Cuban, "Shrinking Enrollments and Consolidations: Political and Organizational Impacts in Arlington, Virginia, 1973-1978," Education and Urban Society, 1979, 11: p. 392.

[22]Donald Thomas, Strategies for Closing Schools, Reducing Staffs, (NASSP Bulletin, March 1, 1977), p. 9.

3. Ability to tolerate ambivalence
4. Ability to be decisive when faced with difficult decisions
5. Ability to remain positive despite conflict and confrontation
6. Ability to be open, trusting, and accepting of those who oppose school closings[23]

Planning for School Closure

According to Sargent and Handy, each community will respond to its declining enrollment depending upon its individual character - its styles of communication, of decision making, of public action.[24] They maintained that all communities can start from a common premise: Any plan for shrinkage - and there must be a plan - should include ways of improving the quality of service the system delivers, or, at the least, maintaining the current level of service. The decision to close schools will have profound effects on the school systems and the communities involved. The effects will differ from one community to another, but the decision for any community will be valid only if arrived at according to a logical plan. Sargent and Handy in their publication, Fewer Pupils/Surplus Space, presented a plan. They suggested that the "plan for planning" must include:

1. A set of agreed-upon goals, with specific objectives spelled out for each.
2. A factual base defining the "givens" upon which the plan can be developed. In the case of a plan for facility use, this base includes enrollments and their projections; schools, their location, capacity, and general level of adequacy; community changes affecting the location of people and the composition of their groupings; and a "picture" of the physical structure of the district. Cost data on a new construction and/or renovation may also be required.
3. An analysis of the factual data. This is an exercise in fitting the number--pupils and schools--together, and of arranging them in their physical setting.

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[23]Donald Thomas, "Administrative Leadership in School Closures," (NASSP Bulletin, 1980), 64: p. 21.

[24]C.G. Sargent and J. Handy, Fewer Pupils/Surplus Space, A Report, (Educational Facilities Laboratory, Inc., N.Y., 1974), p. 39.

4. A set of possible solutions; alternative grade organizations, patterns of school use, abandonment for outmoded and/or unsafe schools, needed new construction, or closings (or both).
5. A choice among alternatives for a preferred course of action; a justification for the alternative selected; the preparation of the time sequence for the actions to be taken; a cost analysis of the implications of the selected plan as against alternative options.[25]

Such a detailed plan is necessary because school closure is such an emotionally laden problem and needs factual analysis and a well based justification. There was some evidence that communities with a plan are noticeably more successful in closing schools than are those who simply use school closing as a final panic button. Sargent and Handy pointed out some examples of this in their book, Fewer Pupils/Surplus Space.[26]

Keough and Eisenburger developed a "facilities usage test" for assessing a school's potential for closing. Closing a school would mean:

1. Keeping students relatively close to their neighborhood.
2. Keeping students from crossing major physical barriers.
3. Maintaining a similar socio-economic, racial, and ethnic mix.
4. Closing the school with the lowest enrollment.
5. Closing the oldest school with the weakest academic performance record.
6. Closing the least educationally flexible building.
7. Closing the "high-cost" maintenance/capital outlay building.
8. Closing a building that can be recycled.
9. Closing the building that requires the least additional cost in district-wide transportation.
10. Closing the building most in keeping with the recommendations of the district's task force on declining enrollment.[27]

Wholeben developed some guidelines to identify which schools to close. They included:

1. Understand the problem

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[25] Ibid., p. 39.

[26] Ibid., p. 40

[27] Wm. Keough and Katherine Eisenberger, Declining Enrollment: What to Do, (American Association of School Administrators, 1974), p. 24.

2. Formulate a plan (i.e., a "plan for planning")
   a. Involve both school representatives and community residents
   b. Convene specific-function committees, set time frame for results, and allow full visability to the public
   c. Utilize the media for dissemination purposes
   d. Set and meet all deadlines
   e. Release reports before site evaluation
3. Structure the evaluation
   a. Define specific criteria to compare various agreed-upon site characteristics (enrollment, energy consumption, distance between neighboring schools, age of building, demographics of neighborhood, etc.)
   b. Choose an evaluation strategy which will give the type of conclusions that are required
4. Check the results
5. Issue the report
   a. State sites targeted, rationale for selection, and summarize positive effects
   b. Develop a written summary of the elements one through four as described above. Survey procedures used, impact of decisions, recommendations received, and definite time-line for implementing recommendations
   c. Define, discuss, and examine all data-related procedures, evaluation methods and simulation process
   d. Append all interim committee reports, memoranda, data, summary tables, etc.
   e. Distribute copies of the report to schools, city hall, libraries, etc., to maximize the exposure to the public.[28]

Sieradski's school closing process included:

1. Board of Education and superintendent inform community of the enrollment decline and that consolidation will be necessary
2. Set up community task force
3. Two years before closure
   a. Inform community of possible consolidation plans through media, parent-teacher association, newsletters, etc. for each school
   b. Allow for public hearings
4. After hearings, task forces and administration review plans and make final recommendations to board
5. Public hearings again before board approves recommendations
6. Board of education approves or disapproves recommendations
7. Implementation[29]

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[28]B. E. Wholeben, How to Determine Which School to Close, National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 1980), pp. 8-12.

[29]Karen Sieradski, "Implications of Declining Enrollments for Schools," (NAESP School Leadership Digest, no. 4, 1975), p. 32.

According to Sargent and Handy, closing a school is much more than logistics and costs. It is a political issue.[30] Usually, a school has become woven into the fabric of a neighborhood and the neighborhood will resist the loss of its schools. The school's professional staff may also view closing the school with trepidation for it means a loss of teaching positions and a displacement of personnel.

Thomas indicated that the problems associated with school closures are not educational, but rather they are human. He came to the following conclusions about closing schools:

1. Job security is the paramount concern of school employees.
2. The welfare of children is the most important concern of parents.
3. The improvement of the quality of education is the most powerful way of obtaining public support for closing schools.[31]

If the numbers point to continuing surplus space and excess costs, then the district has a problem that won't go away and a closure plan must be put into effect. Sargent and Handy suggested that school closure requires school policy makers to approach closure as a two step process. The first step is to present numbers in enrollment decline for the district as a whole. And only after these have been assimilated, digested, and accepted can one venture to talk about the specific implications this decline may have for closure, especially closure of a particular school. Sargent and Handy stress to "allow plenty of time."[32]

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[30]Sargent and Handy, Op. Cit., p. 45.

[31]Donald Thomas, Administrative Leadership in School Closures, (National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 1980), Vol. 64, p. 21.

[32]Sargent and Handy, Op. Cit., pp. 45-46.

The second general rule stated by Sargent and Handy was that school officials share the problem. Involve the community in planning for closings and selecting the choices to be made. Participation means, among other things, that the facts must be studied, assimilated, and accepted.[33]

Gordon and Hughes suggested that school administrators consider the following criteria before closing schools:

1. Age of buildings
2. Capacity
3. Enrollment
4. Rate of population decline
5. Maintenance costs per student
6. Energy costs per student
7. Change in the nature of the area served by the school
8. Conversion/recycling potential
9. Racial balance[34]

This exercise in setting criteria can and probably should lead to reassessment of the community's educational goals and expectations.

Criteria are designed to give school boards answers to three questions before they approve or disapprove recommendations for closing a school:

1. What effect will the closing of a school (or its continued maintenance under conditions of declining enrollment) have on the education of students, including effects on teachers, programs, and school services?
2. What effect will proposed board action have on the community, especially the immediate neighborhoods?
3. What will be the economic or financial result of the way in which each school building would be disposed?[35]

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[33] Ibid., p. 46.

[34] W. M. Gordon and L. W. Hughes, "Consider This Before Closing Schools," The American School Board Journal, (1980), 107:31.

[35] Brodinsky, Op. Cit., p. 30.

Faust pointed out that experience with school closing seems to demonstrate that the rational decision factors (school building capacity, age, fuel consumption, etc.) while necessary, are not adequate when used alone to support decisions to close schools. He stated that the closing of a school is an emotional issue rather than a statistical one, and needs a strong human touch. He also argued that there is a need for strong community involvement at an early stage in the decision-making process.[36]

Wachtel agreed that community participation is important. He maintained that the closing of schools provides an opportunity for citizens to participate effectively in matters directly affecting their lives. He indicated four basic structures through which citizens can participate in planning for declining enrollment: (1) councils, (2) special task forces, (3) district-wide groups and (4) neighborhood groups.[37]

Brody concluded that even the best planning does not guarantee success, but that the easiest way to overcome community resistance is to involve the community extensively in planning and decision making.[38]

Communities can accept decisions to close their school if they are convinced it benefits their children, if they have been involved in the decision process, and if they understand the issue involved in enrollment decline.

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[36]John F. Faust, Op. Cit., pp. 20 and 125.

[37]B. Wachtel and B. Powers, Rising Above Decline, (Boston, The Institute for Responsible Education, 1979), pp. 161-163.

[38]J. A. Brody, "How to Close a School and Not Tear Your Community Apart in the Process," American School Board Journal, (June, 1976), p. 35.

School administrators have learned several things according to a survey done by Brodinsky for the American Association of School Administrators in 1981.

1. Involve the community in planning and decision making.
2. Closing schools cannot be done quickly.
3. The most important steps a school district can take to prepare for declining enrollment is to plan, plan, plan.
4. That long-range community planning task forces are a valid resource for school districts.[39]

In this chapter the available literature regarding declining enrollment and school closure was reviewed. It provided evidence to support the identification of components which should be included in a model for school closing.

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[39]Brodinsky, Op. Cit., pp. 5, 17.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF PLANS FOR SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In addition to the data obtained through the literature review, further information was sought as a basis for developing the model to which this study is directed. This chapter is a description of school closing plans in three major school systems: Seattle, Washington, Salt Lake City, Utah, and Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Seattle, Washington

In Seattle, enrollment in the public schools has dropped by one-half in the last two decades. Total enrollment declined by 99,722 in 1963 to 50,000. By the end of 1979 approximately 22 elementary schools or 28 percent had fewer than 225 students. Some high schools dropped to below 900 students although they were built to house over 1,500. Many junior high schools originally housing 1,200 students were below 600.[40]

Schools were closed in the 1960s and in the early 1970s. Only two of these closures were directly related to declining enrollments. The closures generally proceeded without strong community protest. However, following the closing of Interlake and Georgetown Elementary Schools in 1971, the climate of community acceptance changed.

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[40] Design for the Future: Schools for Seattle's Families, Seattle: Seattle Public Schools (December, 1979), p. 1.

School district discussions of building closures became a topic of community resistance which reached its height during the summer of 1974.[41]

It was at this time that the school district administration presented a plan to the Seattle School Board recommending the closing of seven elementary schools. The residents of the proposed closure neighborhoods were opposed to the plan. The Seattle City Council and Mayor were also opposed.[42]

The opposition argued that elementary schools were an essential element in the maintenance of the neighborhood viability. The case against closing schools usually centered around the following themes:

1. The effect of school closure upon neighborhood quality.
2. The effect of school closure upon resident's satisfaction with their neighborhood.
3. The effect of school closure upon education quality.
4. The effect of school closure upon the level of community support for their schools.
5. The effect of school closure upon community utilization of school facilities.[43]

The arguments had their effect and following a city-wide series of public hearings, the Seattle School District Superintendent recommended against closures, pending further study. Following this decision to postpone closures, the City of Seattle, the Seattle School District, and the Joint Advisory Commission on Education applied to the National Institute of Education for a grant to explore school closures.[44] The National Institute of Education grant proposal was designed so that a neighborhood survey

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[41] Schools and Neighborhood Research Study, City of Seattle, and Seattle Public Schools (December, 1976), p. 23.

[42] Ibid., p. 23.

[43] Ibid., p. 23.

[44] Ibid., p. 24.

and impact study could be done by research consultants.

In September, 1978, the superintendent appointed a 70-member citizens committee to advise him regarding building improvements and any educational policy issues related to facilities planning. This citizens group charged with advising the superintendent on a long-range facilities plan was the District Planning Commission (DPC).[45] Commission members served either as individuals or as representatives of groups, organizations, businesses, and labor groups. A steering committee was designated to set the commission agendas, make assignments to task forces, plan commission activities and evaluate and advise the commission on the work program and the commission's policies and procedures. Six task forces were developed in six geographic planning areas (see Figure 1) which cover the entire district. These task forces were composed of commission members, as well as other citizens interested in participating in the geographic planning.[46] Several other task forces were used to carry out specific activities as developing recommendations for 1990 use of high schools, etc. This District Planning Commission and the district facilities staff and other governmental agencies including the City of Seattle worked over a period of two years to develop the "Seattle Public Schools 1990 Facilities Plan." The District Planning Commission and the staff worked cooperatively throughout the process to develop a series of preliminary alternatives which were subsequently offered for review at community meetings chaired by the District Planning Commission throughout the district.

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[45] Design for the Future: Schools for Seattle's Families, op. cit., p. 9.

[46] Ibid., p. 9.

Two district administrative committees assisted in the development of the facilities plan. One was the facilities planning team which was a working committee comprised of principals, special programs, and special education representatives. The other was the administrative policy committee which was comprised of the associate superintendent, the assistant superintendent for each division and area administrators and principals. This group reviewed the work of the Facilities Planning Team to insure its consistency with Board and administrative policies and procedures.[47]

A representative of the Seattle Teachers' Association served on the District Planning Commission and some teachers were members of the District Planning Commission task forces.[48]

The Seattle facilities planning process had four phases:

1. The development of Board policies, guidelines, and data collection (May, 1979).
2. 1990 plan preparation which included:
   a. development of alternative geographic facilities proposals developed by the District Planning Commission and the Facilities Planning Team and review by the Administrative Policy Group Commission,
   b. the evaluation of the alternative facilities proposals by the District Planning Commission and technical planning staff, and
   c. the development of the 1990 Facilities Plan which included the narrowing of the facilities strategies by geographic area and implementation recommendations (December, 1979).
3. Preparation and review of an environmental analysis (spring, 1980)
4. Development of financial strategies, which included a bond issue election preparation.[49]

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[47] Ibid., p. 10.

[48] Ibid., p. 10.

[49] Ibid., p. 10.

Phase one was completed in the spring of 1979 when the Seattle School Board adopted a set of policy guidelines. These were summarized below:

1. Grade Configuration - K-6, 7-8, and 9-12

2. School Size - number of students, minimum and maximum, at each of these levels were as follows:

Grades in School	Students Per Grade	Student Minimum	School Maximum	Teacher Minimum	Teaching Staff 25 Student Maximum
K-6	50-100	350	650	11	23
7-8	300-450	600	900	24	36
9-12	300-400	1,200	1,600	48	64

3. Programs - There will be general high school programs supplemented by specialized programs in designated schools.

4. Educational Criteria - All facilities retained will meet minimum standard educational criteria as play area, administrative and support base, standards for site size.

5. Space Allocations - There will be allotted 40 square feet of classroom space per student for elementary, middle and junior high students, and 45 square feet of classroom space for senior high school students.[50]

Phase two, the 1990 facilities plan preparation, was begun in June, 1979. The staff, in coordination with the District Planning Commission, divided into six geographic planning areas for the purpose of developing alternative facilities plans. Enrollment projections were developed district wide (see Table 5) and distributed within each planning area and then related to existing or planned capacity of buildings. The first step then was to plan for building capacity within these planning areas to house the projected student population. Schools were located to serve a resident population: for elementary students between

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[50] Ibid., p. 11.

350 and 650 students, for 7-8 grade level between 600-900 students and between 1,200 and 1,600 at the high school level.[51]

In developing alternatives for facilities use, the following criteria were used:

1. Building condition - physical condition
2. Location of facility
3. Need for building based on student enrollment projections
4. Desegregation
5. Transportation
6. City land use concerns
7. Program considerations
8. Cost
9. Neighborhood characteristics[52]

After the six planning areas had developed their alternative plans, the School Board held public hearings in September, 1979. The alternative plans were evaluated by the technical planning staff with cooperation and information from the desegregation technical planning team and from the instructional services staff. Cost estimate information was provided by the Building and Planning Department, transportation information was provided by the Transportation Department, and recommendations from the City of Seattle were provided. The alternatives were then narrowed by geographic area by the District Planning Commission task forces and they were again reviewed by the public.[53]

In November, 1979, the 1990 city-wide proposals and implementation plans were prepared by the staff and administration based on the District Planning Commission's recommendations. The Superintendent

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[51] Ibid., p. 12.

[52] Long-Range Facilities Plan, 1981-1990, Seattle Public Schools, (August, 1981), p. 4.

[53] Design for the Future: Schools for Seattle's Families, Op. Cit., p. 13.

presented his recommendations to the Board in December, 1979. This recommended plan was revised by the Board and became the K-6 plan.[54]

Following a series of public hearings on the Superintendent's recommended plan, the Board decided to consider an alternative grade configuration, and directed the administration to develop a facilities plan based on a K-5, 6-8, 9-12 grade configuration.[55]

The K-5 plan was developed by district facilities planners and desegregation planners in the spring of 1980, using the same criteria described for the K-6 plan. The District Planning Commission, the District-Wide Advisory Committee for Desegregation, community organizations, and individual citizens had opportunities for input in development of the K-5 plan.[56]

Following the Board's decision in March, 1980, to develop a three-year (1981-1984) implementation schedule for the K-5 and K-6 proposals, a facilities/desegregation implementation schedule was prepared jointly by desegregation planners and facilities planners to coordinate all related activities during those three years.[57]

During the summer of 1980, the Board held a series of public hearings and community meetings to review the K-5 and K-6 alternatives. Based on these meetings, the Board made a number of modifications to the two proposed plans and on September 17, 1980, adopted a resolution establishing objectives for the long-range facilities plan and directing that

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[54] Long-Range Facilities Plan, 1981-1990, op. cit., p. 6.

[55] Ibid., p. 6.

[56] Ibid., p. 6.

[57] Ibid., p. 6.

an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared to evaluate the impacts of the proposed K-5 and K-6 plans.[58]

Upon Board direction to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement, district staff mailed a formal pre-draft consultation letter to 98 units of government, agencies, or organizations with jurisdiction, expertise, or investment in the impacts of proposed alternative plans. These letters requested appropriate analyses and responses to questions related to potential impacts of adoption of the plans including school closures. Fifty-seven responses were received. Questionnaires were also distributed soliciting citizen views on impacts of school closures and alternative facilities plans. Citizens had opportunity to respond either in writing or at public hearings. Following the environmental review process, the Board reached its long-range plan decision in February, 1981.[59]

The long-range facilities plan adopted by the Seattle School Board contained two parts:

1. 1990 building use classification plan which identifies buildings required to serve the high and low projected enrollments for 1990.
2. A 1981-1984 implementation plan which identifies buildings to be improved, closed, or converted to different grade levels.[60]

The 1990 Building Classification Plan classified each district building as "core," "retain," or "nonessential." Core buildings were those intended to be used for district instructional purposes through 1990. Core buildings were expected to have adequate capacity to house

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[58] Ibid., p. 6.

[59] Ibid., p. 8.

[60] Ibid., p. 11.

the 1990 low enrollment projections. Retain buildings were those which would be needed at high enrollment levels. Most buildings classified retain were closed prior to the 1981-1982 school year, but retained for possible use during higher enrollment periods.

Nonessential buildings were those that would not be used by the district for instructional programs under the long-range plan, even if high enrollment projections were realized. Most all nonessential buildings were closed prior to the 1981-1982 school year and were either leased or sold. Modifications to these building classifications would be made if by 1983-1984, enrollment trends indicated that 1990 enrollment would be higher or lower.

The Board adopted a basic K-6, 7-8, 9-12, grade configuration. However, it was agreed that through 1983-1984, 6-8 grade centers would be retained at five middle schools and K-5 at their feeder elementary schools. The dual grade configurations was to be re-examined and a decision made prior to 1983-1984 on whether to standardize grade configurations district wide. The K-6 configuration was used as the basis of the 1990 plan.[61]

The plan forecast a maximum of 86 core schools operating in 1990 at low enrollment. With a capacity of 49,213, those schools would accommodate a projected enrollment of 38,175 students. Included were:

1. Sixty-five elementary school, a decline of 12 from number in use in 1980-1981. The total capacity is 25,614, and is sufficient to serve a projected K-6 enrollment of 25,431.
2. Ten core middle schools, a decline of six from the number in use in 1980-1981. The total capacity is 9,888 for a projected enrollment of 5,080.

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[61] Ibid., p. 11.

3. Eight to ten core high schools compared to 12 in use in 1980-1981. The total capacity of eight-ten high schools are 10,180 and 12,800 respectively, serving a projected 10,000 in 1995. Since high school enrollment projections reach the lowest point in 1989, 1990 and 1995, projections were used for high school planning. Two high schools have been identified as core or retain. The decision will be made by the 1984-1987 implementation schedule according to conditions developed by then.
4. There are ten elementary schools classified as retain to be used for higher enrollments. There are four middle schools classified retain. Thirteen buildings are classified as nonessential and will be leased or sold.[62]

The district owned 270 portables, 90 of which were well maintained and met current codes. These were to be retained to meet possible fluctuations in enrollments. The others were to be disposed of.[63]

The 1981-1984 implementation scheduled included activities for the first three-year period of the long-range plan with most closures occurring in the fall of 1981. The adopted plan scheduled the following:

1981-1982
Ten elementary school closures
One junior high school closure
Two high school closures
Three junior high/middle school conversions
Three other facilities used for special programs will be vacated

1982-1983
One elementary school closure
One junior high school closure

1983-1984
One junior high school closure

By the 1983-1984 school year nineteen buildings were to have been closed.[64]

In addition to responding to the district's need to achieve significant operating economies in the 1980s by the consolidation of

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[62] Ibid., pp. 12-13.

[63] Ibid., p. 13.

[64] Ibid., p. 15.

educational programs, the development of the long-range facilities plan was based on the need to guarantee the safe and appropriate nature of facilities used to house educational and support functions. Some of the facilities which were classified as core required capital investment in order to remedy structural, code, and educational adequacy deficiencies. Sixty percent of the buildings were constructed prior to 1950. Major improvements at specific buildings were to be proposed for the first three year implementation period. These renovation and construction activities were to begin no earlier than 1983.[65]

Beginning in the fall of 1982, the planning for the second planning cycle was to be initiated to develop implementation schedules for the academic years 1984-1985 through 1987-1988.[66] At that time it was expected that more accurate data bases would be available.

Salt Lake City, Utah

Salt Lake City was one of the first urban centers to undergo a severe decline in enrollment. In the 1960s most cities that lost population were coping with desegregation, but not Salt Lake City. Its minority school enrollment is about twelve percent consisting mostly of Chicanos (ten percent), Indians, and a small percentage of Blacks. It has never been under court order and its schools have been voluntarily desegregated without significant problems.

However, in the late 1950s, attractive new suburbs were developed to the south of the city. Middle class families moved by the hundreds to live in the suburbs and work downtown.

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[65] Ibid., p. 18.

[66] Ibid., p. 18.

Salt Lake City's enrollment peaked at 42,323 in 1958-1959,[67] and then began to drop by about four and one-half percent per year until it reached its low in 1979-1980 of approximately 21,000 students.[68]

In many districts, the enrollment increases taper off in the years immediately preceding the decline. In Salt Lake City the increases for the five years before decline were 1,362, 279, 345, and 967. There was no rush to private schools. The decline was simply a loss of population in Salt Lake City. In 1960 the population of Salt Lake City was 189,000 and by 1970 it was down to 175,000.[69]

For ten years the school district did little. Ten schools were closed, never more than two a year, and three new schools were opened. The problems got worse. Funding for the schools in Utah was a program of equalized state educational funding. Money generated by Salt Lake City's tax effort was drained off to equalize other areas in the state. The city did not have the option to increase taxes to save its schools.

The Utah state aid formulas did not take account of situations of enrollment decline. Loss of a student in June meant less state aid in September.[70]

The superintendent at this time was nearing retirement and did not want to fight the battles of unpopular school closings. The district had no choice but to slash educational programs and cut back on staff.

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[67] Declining Enrollment, National School Public Relations Association, (Arlington, Virginia, 1976), p. 48.

[68] Letter from Salt Lake City School District, Stanley Morgan, Administrator, Educational Accountability, (September, 1982).

[69] Declining Enrollment, op. cit., p. 48.

[70] Ibid., p. 48.

In 1969 a new superintendent was appointed and he closed six schools in June of 1970. He formed community task forces and committees during the school year 1969-70. He met with the mayor, city council, and representatives of community groups, parent-teacher associations, the university, and the Mormon Church to explain the problems and seek support for school closings. Public meetings were held and the citizens were involved, but bitter controversy and strenuous battles were fought to "close someone else's school."[71]

The school district was in financial crisis and the problem of declining enrollment had been ignored too long. The superintendent had to move too quickly toward school closures and did not have time to condition the community. The citizens saw the loss of their neighborhood schools as a negative response to the problem. Even though the superintendent tried to work with the press and local television stations, explaining the problem with charts and graphs, he was unable to gain their support as they sensed too much outrage from the community.

About this time the State Legislature reduced Salt Lake City's school board from twelve to seven members. Campaigns for the Board centered on "no school closures." Members who had served were not returned and the Board's stability was destroyed. Having lost his base of support, the superintendent resigned.[72]

Salt Lake City may have learned the hard way, but it did learn. In 1973, four elementary schools and one secondary school were closed.

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[71] Ibid., p. 49.

[72] Ibid., p. 49.

In 1975, three secondary schools were closed bringing the total since 1958 to 23 schools closed. This time the transition was smooth and the community accepted the decision calmly. School board members elected on a promise not to close schools have now faced the problem. In 1978, two more elementary schools and one intermediate school were closed. To date, Salt Lake City has closed 23 elementary schools and six secondary schools.[73]

The present superintendent, who successfully closed the schools since 1973, instituted a school-closing plan that allowed more citizen involvement over a longer period and took into account the major concerns of the public.

The following school-closing plan was devised:

Step One

1. Establish a comprehensive citizen's committee to study the problem and make recommendations to the board of education.
   a. Provide assistance to the committee
   b. Have them operate under a specific charge
   c. Set a date for final report; do not extend the time
   d. Make the report public at the same time it is given to the board of education.

Step Two

1. Hold public meetings to discuss the report, to develop tentative solutions and to receive additional information.
   a. Discuss implications of conflict on school district
   b. Present the problem-solving process to the public
   c. Give and receive information
   d. Record all information presented at public hearings.

Step Three

1. Develop tentative solutions and modify them if necessary.

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[73] Ibid., p. 49.

Step Four

1. Present final solutions at a general public meeting.

Step Five

1. Take action at an official board of education meeting.

Step Six

1. Implement board of education decision.[74]

In Salt Lake City about one year was alloted for the citizens committee to develop options and make recommendations. The committee was chosen by nominations from the parent-teacher associations and representatives from a broad range of citizens groups from which the board picked about 30 members. After the committee made its report it was mailed to about 200 influential persons in the city and to the media. A second year was spent on public hearings after which the board made its decision. The district implemented the board's decision the next school year.[75]

The Salt Lake City superintendent stressed that the central consideration was not money but programs. He demonstrated at public hearings that school closings were directly related to programs. He stressed that citizens must make a choice between retaining buildings or retaining educational programs. In Salt Lake City the community has accepted the advantages of program improvement over the operation of more buildings. The media also supported the decision.[76]

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[74] Ibid., pp. 49-50.

[75] Ibid., p. 50.

[76] Ibid., p. 50.

After 1975 most closings were junior high schools as the district moved to a pattern of K-6, 7-8, and 9-12.[77] The city's four high schools were converted to four year programs. In the 1982-1983 school year Salt Lake City tentative figures showed an approximate 3,000 student increase.[78] That may mean that it will not be necessary for further schools to be closed, and that the stability that now existed in Salt Lake City and its school district would be maintained.

Tulsa, Oklahoma

The Tulsa school system was faced with problems similar to those of Seattle and Salt Lake City - declining enrollment. The decline in Tulsa followed a pattern not unlike that experienced by most large cities. After tremendous growth for two decades following World War II, enrollment peaked in 1968 with 80,116 students. Between 1968 and the 1981-1983 school year, enrollment declined to 48,585 (see Table 6) and was expected to continue to decline until the late 1980s (see Table 7).

At its peak the district operated 105 schools, but by 1982 it was operating 94.[79]

The period of declining enrollment in Tulsa can be described in eight phases:

Phase One. From 1968 to 1976, elementary class size was reduced from 33 to 22 pupils.[80] There were similar reductions at the

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[77] Ibid., p. 50.

[78] Letter from Salt Lake City, Stanley Morgan, op. cit.

[79] Master Plan for School Consolidation, Tulsa Public Schools, (August, 1982), p. 1.

[80] How to Cope with Declining Enrollment, Paul McCloud, Tulsa Public Schools, (April, 1980).

level. Programs were expanded to utilize the new space created by decreased enrollment.

Phase Two. By 1976, it became evident that the district could no longer afford to operate schools with as few as 150 students. In the fall of 1976 the Department of Research, Planning, and Development prepared a "School Facilities Study." This report presented an analysis of past and projected membership trends for each school, with a description of the age, condition and capacity of each building. This study documented excessive per-student costs and restricted program offerings in small schools. Schools having a per pupil operational cost twenty-five percent above the district average were designated "cost ineffective" and marked for further study. The cost ineffective level included elementary schools with memberships of less than 250, junior high schools under 460, and senior high schools below 900.[81]

This "School Facilities Study" was released to the Board of Education and the news media in February, 1977. It made front page headlines and created concern in those neighborhoods which had low enrollment schools. Armed with charts and statistics, the district set out to convince the community and the Board that two small elementary schools should be closed. One was closed and both the media and community leaders supported the need to consolidate schools.

Phase Three. In May, 1977, the Superintendent appointed a 48-member citizen's task force on declining enrollment. It consisted of:

- One Task Force Leader

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[81] Master Plan for School Consolidation, op. cit., p. 2.

- Twenty representatives chosen by parent-teacher association groups.
- Three teachers, one each from elementary school, junior and senior high schools.
- Three principals
- Six school advisors
- Fifteen representatives from community organizations[82]

The Task Force was charged with the following responsibilities:

1. To study the past and projected membership trends of the Tulsa Public Schools.
2. To review the capacity and the condition of the various school buildings.
3. To examine the effect of the size of a school's enrollment upon per pupil operational costs.
4. To condsider the influence of a school's enrollment upon the educational program offerings.
5. To recommend to the Superintendent (a) a long-range plan for utilizing the physical plants of the school district most efficiently and to the maximum benefit of the children served, and (b) the actions required to meet the facility utilization needs for the 1978-1979 school year.[83]

After nine months of study, in January, 1978, the Task Force made a number of recommendations. Some of the more relevant recommendations were as follows:

1. The Task Force suggested that a school is seriously cost ineffective when the cost per pupil exceeds thirty percent of the average for all pupils in Tulsa. However, the student capacity of a building should also be an important factor in determining the cost-ineffectiveness of a school. Minimum enrollments suggested are 225 in elementary schools, 450 in junior high schools, and 825 in senior high schools.[84]

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[82] Ibid., p. 2.

[83] Ibid., p. 2.

[84] Final Report of the Advisory Task Force on Declining Enrollment, Tulsa Public Schools, (February, 1978), p. 2.

2. The Tulsa school system should strive to utilize school facilities at a minimum of seventy-five percent capacity and a maximum of one-hundred percent.[85]

3. Any solution to the declining enrollment problem will require the complete support of the citizens whose tax money maintains the schools. There should be a constant long-range effort to keep the citizens informed and involved in the planning, operation, and utilization of the schools.[86]

4. No school should be closed until all alternatives have been explored. Parents in that neighborhood should be consulted as to what kind of school they are willing to accept.[87]

5. The Task Force studied four possible grade reorganization plans. The conclusion was that the K-5, 6-8, 9-12 plan has definite advantage over others considered.

6. The four elementary school subcommittees supported the opinion of the entire Task Force that a close liaison must be maintained between parents, citizens, and school administrators. The neighborhood school, especially at the elementary level, is a strong tradition and it is difficult to make parents understand that when enrollment falls below 300 students the quality of education suffers. All plans involving school closing or redistricting should be discussed openly in parent assemblies and in the city media. Every opportunity should be given for open public discussion of all ideas, plans, causes, and objections. When patrons understand the importance of proper utilization of tax dollars and the need for a superior curriculum for their children, they will realize that their school has not been singled out, but that the problem is district-wide and all patrons share responsibility for solving the problem.[89]

7. Close the following nine elementary schools: Dunbar, Douglass, Lincoln, Lynn Lane, Lowell, Remington, Riley, Stevenson, and Whittier.[90]

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[85] Ibid., p. 4.

[86] Ibid., p. 4.

[87] Ibid., p. 5.

[88] Ibid., p. 5.

[89] Ibid., p. 8.

[90] Ibid., pp. 10-17.

8. That coterminous boundaries be created for junior and senior high schools, where possible and feasible. This would allow for a desirable continuum of curriculum and would not cause additional busing of students.[91]

9. That all the Tulsa public high schools be converted to and maintained as four-year high schools to include nine, ten, eleven, and twelfth grades. This would allow for expanded curricula and could induce more students to complete high school.[92]

The Task Force report was given extensive coverage by the media, which stimulated a number of objections from parents in the schools identified for prospective closing. Nevertheless, based on the Task Force recommendations, the Board of Education approved the closing of three elementary schools at the close of the 1977-1978 school year.[93]

Phase Four. Phase four of the declining enrollment in Tulsa began in the fall of 1978. Acting upon one of the major Task Force conclusions, and believing he had community support, the Superintendent recommended to the Board of Education that all Tulsa schools be reorganized on a K-6, 7-8, 9-12 grade plan. After strong opposition to this plan was voiced in two open Board hearings, the Superintendent withdrew his recommendation.[94]

Phase Five. Phase five began in the fall of 1978 when the Superintendent and his staff, under pressure from the Justice Department for further desegregation, sought public involvement in making Mason High

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[91] Ibid., p. 20.

[92] Ibid., p. 20.

[93] Master Plan for School Consolidations, Tulsa Public Schools, (August, 1982), p. 4.

[94] How to Cope with Declining Enrollment, Paul McCloud, Tulsa Public Schools, (April, 1980), p. 2.

school, the smallest senior high school, a magnet school to attract Black students. Response to this was cool, especially from the Black community which refused to volunteer its students to travel across town to bolster a White school's sagging enrollment. After much controversy, the Board voted by a four to three margin to close Mason High School, a five-year-old $4,000,000 school named after a former superintendent still living in the community.[95]

Because of its declining enrollment and to further desegregation, Roosevelt Junior High School was also closed in May, 1979 and its students assigned to Madison and Wilson Junior High Schools. The Roosevelt building was converted to serve the students from Pershing Elementary School.[96]

The closing of these schools, particularly Mason, was very difficult. Everyone agreed that the loss of 25,000 students meant some schools would have to be closed. Out of this controversy there emerged three suggestions from the community for making the school consolidation process more palatable:

1. It was urged that a master plan be developed which would state the criteria to be used in selecting schools to be closed and would specify the timeline for these consolidations.
2. Parents requested that they be given more advance notice of school consolidation so they could plan their children's education futures with more assurance.
3. Patrons asked that they have more opportunity for direct involvement in the planning for school consolidation.[97]

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[95] Ibid., p. 3.

[96] Master Plan, op. cit., p. 5.

[97] Master Plan, op. cit., p. 5.

Phase Six. Phase six of the declining enrollment picture in Tulsa was then the development of a Master Plan for School Consolidation. It was adopted by the Board of Education in September, 1979, and put into operation.

For the development of the Master Plan, the Tulsa district was divided into nine area planning councils, each of which encompassed one senior high school and all of the junior high/middle schools and elementary schools which contribute pupils to that senior high school. The area councils were to meet at least three times a year. Membership of each area planning council included:

1. Parent-Teacher Association member from each area school, not a school employee.
2. Three school principals - one elementary, one junior high, and one senior high selected by principals in the area.
3. Three teachers - one elementary, one junior high, and one senior high selected by the Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association.
4. Student representation from secondary school in area.
5. Three or more members-at-large, hopefully, but not limited to, representatives of the business industry.
6. If at any time the Area Planning Council considers a recommendation to close or consolidate any school, the principal and one teacher from that building shall be invited to serve as voting members of the council.[98]

Each school in the district was to have a School Planning Council which must meet at least three times a year. The members of this council were:

1. Parent-Teacher Association Unit President
2. Two other elected officers of the local Parent-Teacher Association Unit
3. Building principal
4. Two teachers (appointed by the Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association delegates in building)
5. Three parents (elected through the Parent-Teacher Association)

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[98] Ibid., p. 6.

6. Student representation at the discretion of the council.[99]

Whenever any proposal of these School Planning Councils may have impact on other area schools, the School Planning Council must coordinate its efforts with the Area Planning Council.

The Area Planning Councils prepared and forwarded to the Superintendent their recommended school consolidation plan. The suggestions of the Area Planning Councils were to be given careful consideration by the Superintendent and his staff as they prepared recommendations to the Board.

To receive information and to coordinate the efforts of the Area Planning Councils, the Superintendent and his staff were to meet periodically with a group called the Area Planning Council Coordinating Committee. This committee consisted of the chairperson and the vice-chairperson from each of the nine area planning councils (see Table 8).

The Master Plan for School Consolidation was based on the following assumptions:

1. The memberships recommended by the Advisory Task Force on Declining Enrollment represented the minimum number of students needed to make a school educationally and economically viable. These minimums were 225 for elementary, 450 for junior high/middle schools, and 825 for senior high schools.
2. The Parent-Teacher Association is the most logical organization vehicle through whcih to solicit and receive community input for school consolidation.[100]

The following sequence was planned for Tulsa:

1. When the membership of a school on the last day of the first quarter of any school year falls below the minimum, the Area Planning Council was to begin formulating a consolidation plan.

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[99] Ibid., p. 6.

[100] Ibid., p. 8.

Active community involvement was encouraged to insure that all patrons affected had an opportunity to help shape the plan which was to be submitted. In practice, the year in which this occurs would usually not come as a surprise. When the membership approached the minimum, or when it is forecast to fall below the minimum for the following year, the Area Council was to begin work on a preliminary plan. If the membership did not drop as much as expected, no further action was needed. If the final plan involved any school outside that area, the plan was also to be approved by the second Area Planning Council. This approved consolidation plan was to be submitted to the Superintendent in early January.

2. Between January and March, the Superintendent was to review the suggestions presented by the Area Planning Council(s) and prepare his/her consolidation recommendation for presentation to the Board of Education at its second meeting in March. Should the Area Planning Council fail to submit suggestions for a plan, the Superintendent was still obligated to present a consolidation recommendation to the Board.

3. The Board was to act upon the Superintendent's consolidation recommendation in April, with implementation of the approved plan in the following fall.[101]

The Area Planning Councils were encouraged to consider all alternative consolidation plans before submitting their final recommendations. The councils were encouraged to consider the following criteria in the development of a consolidation plan:

1. Membership - current and projected for each school
2. Operational costs
3. Program offerings
4. Facility
5. Receiving schools
6. Transportation
7. Desegregation
8. Alternate uses for the facility.[102]

To expedite the work of the councils, schools were prioritized according to enrollment. Those already below the recommended minimum

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[101] Ibid., p. 5.

[102] Ibid., pp. 8-9.

were classified as "priority one." The area councils studied these from September to January, when they were required to submit some type of consolidation plan to deal with these underenrolled schools. Priority two and three schools were those projected to fall below the minimum in one or two years.

Recommendation of the Master Plan to the Board on August 31, 1979, with the naming of the priority schools, drew front page headlines in the local press. Particularly upset were the patrons and students of Webster, the only high school on the priority one list. The Webster community reacted quickly, first in anger, then in diligent study to find a way to save their school. The Master Plan was approved by the Board in September, 1979.[103] It brought praise from the news media, community leaders, and the Chamber of Commerce.

By December, the Webster Council had developed and the Board had approved, a plan of grade reorganization making Webster a four-year high school, Clinton Junior High School a middle school, serving grades 6-8, and the consolidation of six elementary schools into five serving grades K-5.[104]

Other councils were working. One voted to consolidate two junior high schools and move the ninth graders to the high school. Another decided to consolidate two small elementary schools into one. Another council recommended closing two elementary schools. Later, the Board voted to keep one of them open. Another council, even though it

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[103] How to Cope with Declining Enrollment, op. cit., p. 3.

[104] Ibid., p. 4.

had not priority one schools, voted to make its senior high a four-year school and to convert one junior high to a middle school.[105]

The plan did not eliminate the emotion associated with closing schools. Nevertheless, the district now had more understanding and acceptance from the community.

Phase Seven. Phase seven of the declining enrollment program for Tulsa was a two-year moratorium on school closing. Since most of the more serious consolidation situations had been addressed, and with financial and other pressing problems confronting them, the Board adopted a moratorium on school closings for the 1980-1981 and 1981-1982 school years.

Phase Eight. A new phase was to begin in Tulsa with the 1982-1983 school year. The moratorium was lifted and the councils were swinging into action. One elementary and one junior high school had reached minimum enrollment levels.

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[105] Ibid., p. 4.

CHAPTER IV

A MODEL FOR CLOSING SCHOOLS IN LARGE METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS EXPERIENCING DECLINING ENROLLMENT

At first glance, closings, consolidations, reorganizations, and other possible solutions appear to be administrative decisions based on facts. Solutions, however, will affect people and will affect them at their most vulnerable and emotional points - their children and their pocketbooks.

On the basis of the literature review and the case studies, criteria for a school closing model should include the following:

Early Planning. After enrollment figures indicate that the district is experiencing declining enrollment, planning should begin. Enrollment projections should be determined and then the district should develop and implement a plan of action to cope with the anticipated conditions.

Community Involvement. The community should be informed about problems facing their school district. The community should be involved in planning and decision making.

Lead Time. A significant time period for community study and subsequent acceptance should be incorporated in the plan.

Flexibility. There should be flexibility to allow for adjustments pertinent to different situations.

Communication. There should be continued communication between groups involved in the consolidation process.

Model for School Closing

The model for school closing contains four components.

Component One - Data Gathering

Data to be collected in this phase should include the following:

1. School facilities study of all schools in the district.
2. Report on past and projected enrollment statistics for the district.
3. Report on financial situation of the district including operational cost per pupil.
4. Statement of minimum and maximum sizes of schools to be used for the consolidation plans.
5. State of criteria to be used for school closing.
6. Impact on education programs offered.
7. Impact on desegregation.
8. Impact on transportation.
9. Impact on local community.

Component Two - Community Education

The community should be made aware of the problems faced by the district due to declining enrollment. This should be undertaken immediately after identification of the problems facing the district.

The superintendent and staff must assume the responsibility for this and continue throughout the entire process. This can be accomplished via media, various civic organizations, city officials, chamber of commerce, boards of realtors, parent-teacher association groups, ministerial alliance, education staff, and other groups pertinent to a particular community. Open meetings should be held throughout the process to provide communication with the community.

Component Three - Organization

The organization of community planning councils is the method this model utilizes for community involvement in the school closing process.

School Planning Council. School planning councils should be organized in every school. This council should meet periodically to consider matters of concern in that school. Membership could include:

- Parent-Teacher Association Unit President
- Other elected officers of the local parent-teacher unit
- Building principal
- Teachers
- Parents
- Student representation at the discretion of the council

Composition of this council is graphically depicted in Figure 2. Whenever any proposal may have impact on other area schools, the school planning council must coordinate its efforts with the area planning council.

Area Planning Council. Area planning councils should be organized with each encompassing one senior high school and all junior high/middle schools, and elementary schools which feed that senior high school (see Figure 3). Area planning councils should meet several times during a school year determined by problems identified in the area served. Each council shall determine the length of the terms of service of its members. Membership of the area planning council could include the following:

- Parent-Teacher Association members elected from each area school, not a school employee.
- School principals (elementary, junior high/middle school, and senior high) selected by the principals in that area.
- Student representation from the secondary schools in that area at the discretion of the council.
- Members-at-large.
- If at any time the area planning council considers a recommendation to close or consolidate any school, the principal and one teacher from that school shall be invited to serve as voting members of the council.

The composition of this council is graphically depicted in Figure 4. Since school consolidation and other issues which are considered frequently involve more than a single school, the area planning council is the pivotal group in the planning process. The suggestions offered by the area planning council are to be carefully considered by the superintendent and the staff as they prepare recommendations for the board.

The area planning council coordinating committee should consist of the chairperson and vice-chairperson of each area planning council. The composition is graphically depicted in Figure 5. This committee should meet periodically with the superintendent and staff to receive information and to help them coordinate the activities of the various councils. It serves in an advisory capacity.

Component Four - Decision Making

This component is described in the following six steps.

Step One. Area planning councils study schools in their area and the data collected by the superintendent's staff. Each area planning council should make a school facilities study for schools in their area even though the superintendent and staff may have made such a study. Careful consideration should be given to the district's criteria for closing schools.

Step Two. Area planning councils make recommendations to the superintendent and staff. A format for use by area planning councils for submitting their consolidation plan is presented in Table 9.

Step Three. The superintendent and staff review these recommendations insuring that programs, desegregation, and financial needs are met. Recommendations are presented by the superintendent for further study to the local board of education in a public meeting. Information is given to the media at this meeting.

Step Four. Superintendent and staff, in conjunction with area planning council members, hold public hearing on recommendations that were presented to the board of education.

Step Five. Superintendent presents to the local school board his recommendations in their final form for adoption.

Step Six. Implementation of the plan approved by the board.

At any point during this process the recommendations may be altered. If the board of education approves the recommendations, they are sent to the superintendent and staff for implementation. If the recommendations are disapproved by the board of education, they are returned to the area planning council for further study. This complete model for school closings is graphically depicted in Figure 6. There must be a time limit on each phase of the plan. However, the time allocated should be sufficient for full study and acceptance of change.

This chapter described the components of the model, their relationships and the process for closing schools. Chapter V is an explanation of the use of the model to close schools in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

CHAPTER V

USE OF THE MODEL TO CLOSE AN ELEMENTARY AND A SECONDARY SCHOOL

Components one, two, and three of the model presented in Chapter IV are preliminary responsibilities that a district must complete in preparation for the decision-making portion of the model. To decmonstrate the working use of the model for closing schools (component Four), two examples of recent school closings in Tulsa will be reviewed. Because Tulsa did not have a consolidation plan, the closing of Mason High School created much controversy and community conflict. It was after this that a consolidation plan was developed and has been used successfully since. The two recent school closings, Bates Elementary School, and Thoreau Junior High School are depicted step-by-step as the model (see Figure 6) was implemented when the enrollment figures indicated that the two schools had reached minimum enrollment. (Minimum enrollment - predetermined by Tulsa district staff and all area planning councils at 225 for elementary schools and 450 for junior high schools).

Bates Elementary School

In the fall of 1981, the Area Planning Council for the Bates Elementary School was notified by the superintendent's staff that Bates

was below minimum enrollment. At that time, the principal and a teacher representative of the Bates School Planning Council became voting members of the Area Planning Council. The Area Planning Council began to make consolidation plans. They met six times between September 27 and December 6, 1982. Study committees met two additional times to prepare information for the rest of the council. The council began studying the facilities and considering the criteria for closing schools. They considered the alternatives available before making their final recommendations to the superintendent in January. The Area Planning Council recommended that Bates Elementary School be closed and the students be reassigned to the adjacent elementary school, Salk. (See Appendix A.)

The superintendent and staff studied the proposals of the area planning council. On February 7, 1983, at a public open meeting of the Board of Education, the superintendent submitted the recommendation that Bates be closed. The Board of Education tabled the recommendation for two weeks for public hearings. There was no opposition to the recommendation and in the February 23, 1983 meeting, the Board of Education approved the recommendation that Bates Elementary School be closed at the end of the 1982-83 school year.

Thoreau Junior High School

In the fall of 1981, the Area Planning Council for Thoreau Junior High School was notified that their gradually declining enrollment was forecast to be below the minimum for the next year. The Area Planning Council began to make preliminary plans. In addition, the information on the declining enrollment at Thoreau was publicized through Tulsa World and other news media and through Thoreau Parent-Teacher Association groups.

several areas of concern that the school council did not feel were adequately handled by the Area Planning Council.

After consideration of the letter, and other community input in public meetings, input from educational staff, and the recommendations of the Area Planning Council, the Board of Education voted on February 23, 1983 to approve the superintendent's recommendation to close Thoreau at the end of the 1982-83 school year.

This chapter was devoted to an explanation of the use of the model to close two schools in a major school district. Chapter VI is devoted to summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to develop a model for closing schools in large metropolitan school districts faced with declining enrollment.

In Chapter II, the literature on declining enrollment and school closure was reviewed. This review suggested components of and the process for development of a model for school closing.

Chapter III is a detailed review of consolidation efforts in three cities: (1) Seattle, Washington, (2) Salt Lake City, Utah, and (3) Tulsa, Oklahoma.

After completing the review of the literature and studying the methods used for school closure in the three aforementioned school districts, the model was designed as presented in Chapter IV. In Chapter IV, the functions and relationships of the components of the model are discussed and graphically illustrated.

The working use of the model is illustrated in Chapter V by reviewing the recent closure of two schools in Tulsa, Oklahoma where the model was implemented.

Conclusions

After reviewing the available literature and studying successes and failures of school districts who have closed schools, a model was developed. The model has been tested and successfully used by the Tulsa school district. The implementation of the model in Tulsa proves that it is a useful tool and could be utilized by other school districts.

It is apparent that today's fast growing school districts contiguous to large urban districts will someday face a declining situation. Further study should be done to help these districts plan their growth for the problem of decline that they will someday encounter.

Recommendations

Based on knowledge gained as a result of this study, the following recommendations can be made for school districts faced with closing schools due to declining enrollment.

1. A district should have a rational consolidation plan.
2. Early planning is crucial.
3. There must be community involvement.
4. Community acceptance is a necessary prior condition.
5. The primary responsibility for recommending specific school closings should rest with the area planning councils.
6. Implementation of closing plans should be the responsibility of the superintendent and his/her staff.
7. Communication and information flow is essential.
8. The superintendent and his/her staff must evaluate recommendations made by area planning councils against the overall goals of the district.

9. It is likely that further study might establish that area planning councils can assist in the disposition of closed facilities.

A basic concept underlying these recommendations is advanced by Norman Maier in his discussions about the potential effectiveness of decisions. Maier said, "Two different dimensions seem to be relevant in appraising a decision's potential effectiveness. One of these is the objective or impersonal quality of the decision; the other has to do with its acceptance with the way the persons who must execute the decisions feel about it."[106]

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[106]Maier, Norman, Problem-Solving Discussions and Conferences: Leadership Methods and Skills, McGraw-Hill Book Company, (New York, N.Y. 1963).

APPENDIX A

Number of Public School Pupils by State (thousands)

State	Student % Change, 1970-75			Student % Change 1978-79		
	1970	1975*	% Change	1978	1979	% Change
Alabama	805	746	-6.0	761	746	-2.0
Alaska	80	86	+7.5	90	89	-1.1
Arizona	440	483	+9.8	509	498	-2.1
Arkansas	463	451	-2.6	456	446	-2.2
California	4633	4394	-5.2	4187	4088	-2.4
Colorado	550	560	+2.4	558	545	-2.3
Connecticut	662	655	-1.1	593	580	-2.2
Delaware	133	129	-3.0	111	108	-2.7
Dist. of Columbia	146	130	-11.0	113	111	-1.7
Florida	1428	1544	+8.1	1513	1479	-2.2
Georgia	1099	1072	-2.5	1093	1067	-2.4
Hawaii	181	175	-3.3	170	167	-1.8
Idaho	182	186	+2.2	203	199	-2.0
Illinois	2357	2278	-3.4	2100	2050	-2.4
Indiana	1232	1177	-4.5	1113	1087	-2.3
Iowa	660	616	-6.7	568	555	-2.3
Kansas	512	446	-12.9	443	423	-2.3
Kentucky	717	695	-3.1	692	676	-2.3
Louisiana	842	833	-1.1	816	797	-2.3
Maine	245	248	+1.2	240	234	-2.5
Maryland	916	887	-3.2	809	790	-2.3
Massachusetts	1168	1200	+2.7	1081	1055	-2.4
Michigan	2181	2121	-2.8	1911	1866	-2.3
Minnesota	921	884	-4.0	807	788	-2.3
Mississippi	534	509	-4.7	493	482	-2.2
Missouri	1040	994	-4.4	900	878	-2.4
Montana	177	171	-3.4	164	160	-2.4
Nebraska	329	316	-4.0	297	291	-2.0
Nevada	128	136	+6.3	146	143	-2.0
New Hampshire	159	171	+7.5	172	169	-1.7
New Jersey	1482	1458	-1.6	1337	1306	-2.3
New Mexico	281	280	-0.4	279	272	-1.4
New York	3477	3411	-1.9	3093	3020	-2.4
North Carolina	1192	1169	-1.9	1162	1135	-2.3
North Dakota	147	132	-10.2	122	119	-2.5
Ohio	2426	2314	-4.6	2102	2052	-2.4
Oklahoma	627	591	-5.7	588	576	-2.0
Oregon	480	473	-1.5	471	460	-2.3
Pennsylvania	2358	2261	-4.1	2046	1998	-2.3
Rhode Island	188	177	-5.9	160	158	-1.2
South Carolina	638	622	-2.5	624	609	-2.4
South Dakota	166	153	-7.8	138	136	-1.4
Tennessee	900	865	-3.9	873	852	-2.4

State	Student % Change, 70-75			Student % Change, 78-79		
Texas	2840	2762	-2.7	2867	2798	-2.4
Utah	304	304	0.0	325	317	-2.5
Vermont	103	104	+0.1	101	99	-1.9
Virginia	1079	1084	+0.5	1055	1030	-2.4
Washington	818	779	-4.8	769	751	-2.3
West Virginia	400	401	0.0	395	387	-2.0
Wisconsin	994	968	-2.6	886	865	-2.4
Wyoming	87	85	-2.3	94	93	-1.1
Total United States	45903	45900*	-2.6	42586	41591**	-2.3

*Source: United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics, Fall Statistics of Public Schools, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1976).

**Digest of Education Statistics, 1980.

TABLE 1

TABLE 2

PROJECTED ENROLLMENTS IN GRADES K-12 IN THE UNITED STATES FOR SELECTED YEARS, 1974-1990[1]

	Enrollment in Year (in thousands)			
GRADE	1974	1980	1985	1990
K	2,672	2,431	2,950	3,172
1	3,527	3,179	3,783	4,200
2	3,540	3,194	3,579	4,095
3	3,691	3,416	3,462	4,074
4	3,793	3,546	3,250	3,902
5	4,036	3,611	3,226	3,879
6	4,045	3,485	3,124	3,677
7	4,092	3,447	3,181	3,519
8	4,108	3,487	3,330	3,353
TOTAL, K-8	33,504[2]	29,796	29,885	33,871
9	4,034	3,552	3,480	3,191
10	3,964	3,657	3,409	3,050
11	3,653	3,501	3,083	2,765
12	3,669	3,619	3,108	2,870
TOTAL, 9-12	15,320[2]	14,329	13,080	11,876

1. Estimated on the basis of Series II projections of the United States Bureau of the Census and age-grade from the United States Census of 1970, Series II is one of three Bureau of the Census population projections series. It is considered the most reasonable choice at this time.

2. In the fall of 1974, there were an estimated 34.4 million enrollees in K-8 and 15.6 million in grades 9-12. See National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Educational Statistics (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1975), Table 1.

Sources: United States Bureau of the Census, Current Polulation Reports, Series P-25, No. 601, "Projections of the Population of the United States, 1975 to 2050," (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), p. 119.

TABLE 3

ENROLLMENT IN GRADES K-8 AND 9-12

FALL 1964 TO 1988

(In Thousands)

YEAR	K-8	9-12	K-12
1964	35,025	12,691	47,716
1965	35,463	13,010	48,473
1966	35,945	13,294	49,239
1967	36,241	13,650	49,891
1968	36,626	14,118	50,744
1969	36,797*	14,322	51,119
1970	36,677	14,632	51,309*
1971	36,165	15,116	51,281
1972	35,531	15,113	50,644
1973	34,953	15,277	50,229
1974	34,419	15,337	49,756
1975	34,087	15,704	49,791
1976	33,606	15,710	49,316
1977	32,939	15,640	48,577
1978	32,055	15,556	47,611
	PROJECTED		
1979	31,100	15,100	46,200
1980	30,900	14,600	45,500
1981	30,800	14,100	44,900
1982	30,900	13,600	44,500
1983	31,200	13,300	44,500
1984	31,500	13,300	44,800
1985	30,248	13,500	43,748
1986	30,651	13,429	44,080
1987	31,395	13,078	44,473
1988	32,259	12,715	44,974

*Peak Year

Source: Projections of Education Statistics to 1984-1985, National Center for Educational Statistics, United States Department of Education, p. 18.

Numbers include public and non-public schools

TABLE 4

STUDENT POPULATION CHANGES

CITY	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	NET LOSS*	% DECREASE
Atlanta	111,227	109,664	105,598	100,316	96,006	88,125	85,298	84,300	26,927	24.2%
Baltimore	192,171	193,123	192,458	190,735	186,507	182,733	182,733	171,451	21,672	11.2%
Boston	94,174	94,887	96,696	96,583	96,239	93,647	87,169	76,005	18,882	19.9%
Buffalo	72,115	71,441	70,305	68,217	64,752	60,752	58,950	56,879	15,236	21.1%
Chicago	582,274	582,071	577,679	574,495	553,342	539,365	530,188	530,000	52,274	9.0%
Cleveland	156,054	150,718	153,169	148,854	145,196	137,569	132,029	127,123	28,931	18.5%
Dade County (Miami)	232,465	244,016	240,447	244,765	241,809	244,395	246,548	244,439	2,109	0.9%
Dallas	159,924	162,490	164,736	157,799	154,581	153,549	149,510	142,034	27,702	13.7%
Denver	96,577	96,634	97,928	94,808	91,616	87,620	79,670	76,503	21,425	21.8%
Detroit	296,097	288,383	284,396	282,076	276,655	263,958	257,396	246,981	49,116	16.6%
Long Beach	72,065	70,472	69,927	69,205	63,838	62,413	62,339	59,271	12,794	17.8%
Los Angeles	653,549	654,654	642,895	633,951	620,659	611,228	598,314	609,645	45,009	6.8%
Memphis	125,813	134,190	148,304	145,903	138,714	119,542	120,186	118,267	30,037	20.3%
Milwaukee	130,445	132,462	132,349	131,815	127,986	123,224	118,474	115,700	16,762	12.6%
Minneapolis	70,006	68,278	66,938	65,201	61,565	58,833	56,161	53,791	16,215	23.2%
Nashville	93,720	95,821	95,313	88,190	85,406	83,521	80,118	80,231	15,590	16.2%
New Orleans	110,783	110,664	109,856	108,969	103,839	98,828	93,927	95,729	15,054	13.6%
New York City	1,063,787	1,115,870	1,140,359	1,131,058	1,125,449	1,104,920	1,103,406	1,102,905	37,454	3.2%
Oakland	64,102	61,679	67,830	67,323	65,189	60,703	61,559	54,768	13,062	19.3%
Philadelphia	282,617	183,209	279,829	273,458	282,965	267,902	266,500	262,500	20,709	7.3%
Pittsburgh	76,268	73,500	73,481	71,502	70,080	68,414	66,106	63,629	12,639	16.8%
Portland	78,413	77,806	76,206	72,694	68,632	66,325	63,514	62,002	16,411	10.9%
St. Louis	115,582	113,374	111,233	107,986	105,617	98,850	93,320	86,999	28,581	24.7%
San Diego	128,914	129,531	128,783	128,327	124,487	123,466	123,114	122,000	7,531	5.8%
San Francisco	94,154	93,139	91,150	83,584	81,970	78,010	67,719	70,777	23,377	24.5%
Toledo	61,684	62,965	61,699	62,597	61,694	59,911	59,049	56,943	6,022	9.6%
Washington	148,725	148,931	145,330	141,806	140,000	136,036	130,807	130,685	18,246	12.2%

*Net Loss = The difference between the 1975 enrollment figure and the maximum enrollment figure during the time period 1968 to 1975
Source: Office of Civil Rights: Education Research System Bulletin, 1975 Fall Enrollment Data and Council Member School Districts' Fall Enrollment Data 1968-74.

TABLE 5

SEATTLE SCHOOL DISTRICT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS 1979-1990 ASSUMING:
(1) Birth rate to increase one percent per year to 1985
(2) Seattle population will gradually increase to 520,000 by 1990
(3) Unchanging level of net outmigration from Seattle School District

GRADE	1978*	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
K	3,036	3,348	3,403	3,395	3,508	3,575	3,558
1	3,366	2,932	3,234	3,286	3,277	3,386	3,451
2	3,864	3,125	2,722	3,001	3,050	3,042	3,143
3	4,181	3,584	2,898	2,524	2,783	2,828	2,820
4	3,818	3,915	3,355	2,714	2,363	2,605	2,647
5	3,636	3,568	3,660	3,135	2,535	2,207	2,434
6	3,632	3,402	3,337	3,423	2,932	2,371	2,064
7	3,644	3,536	3,313	3,248	3,332	2,854	2,308
8	3,806	3,523	3,419	3,202	3,140	3,220	2,758
9	4,172	3,749	3,470	3,367	3,153	3,091	3,170
10	4,289	4,017	3,609	3,339	3,241	3,034	2,975
11	4,415	4,009	3,752	3,372	3,120	3,028	2,834
12	4,364	4,068	3,692	3,457	3,105	2,874	2,788
K-6	25,533	23,874	22,609	21,478	20,448	20,014	20,217
7-12	24,690	22,902	21,255	19,985	19,091	18,101	16,833
Sp. Ed. and Alt. Programs	3,937	3,667	3,439	3,251	3,100	2,988	2,904
TOTAL	54,160	50,443	47,303	42,714	42,639	41,103	39,954

*1978 data are official enrollment figures for November, 1978

GRADE	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
K	3,742	3,827	3,915	4,004	4,095	4,187
1	3,531	3,612	3,695	3,778	3,865	3,952
2	3,202	3,277	3,351	3,428	3,505	3,584
3	2,914	2,968	3,037	3,106	3,177	3,247
4	2,640	2,727	2,778	2,834	2,906	2,973
5	2,472	2,465	2,547	2,594	2,654	2,714
6	2,276	2,311	2,305	2,381	2,425	2,481
7	2,008	2,215	2,249	2,242	2,317	2,360
8	2,231	1,943	2,140	2,174	2,166	2,238
9	2,715	2,196	1,912	2,107	2,139	2,132
10	3,051	2,612	2,113	1,840	2,027	2,058
11	2,779	2,850	2,440	1,974	1,718	1,893
12	2,609	2,559	2,624	2,246	1,817	1,581
K-6	20,777	21,187	21,628	22,134	22,627	23,138
7-12	15,393	14,375	13,478	12,583	12,184	12,262
K-12	36,170	35,562	35,106	34,717	34,811	35,400
Sp. Ed. & Alt. Programs	2,836	2,788	2,753	2,721	2,729	2,775
TOTAL	39,006	38,350	37,859	37,438	37,540	38,175

TABLE 5, 2 of 4

SEATTLE SCHOOL DISTRICT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS 1979-1990 ASSUMING
(1) Birth rate to increase one percent per year to 1985
(2) Seattle population will gradually increase to 520,000 by 1990
(3) Level of outmigration to balance with level of immigration for grades 1-12 by 1985 and remain in balance until 1990; kindergarten-to-birth ratio (ratio of kindergarten enrollment to Seattle births five years earlier) will gradually increase to .80 by 1990.

GRADE	1978*	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
K	3,036	3,389	3,525	3,572	3,754	3,883	4,030
1	3,366	2,924	3,284	3,437	3,504	3,709	3,860
2	3,864	3,134	2,757	3,133	3,320	3,423	3,664
3	4,181	3,597	2,952	2,630	3,023	3,244	3,385
4	3,818	3,922	3,414	2,831	2,548	2,963	3,212
5	3,636	3,577	3,714	3,271	2,740	2,494	2,933
6	3,632	3,407	3,391	3,558	3,170	2,682	2,467
7	3,644	3,523	3,322	3,323	3,505	3,138	2,669
8	3,806	3,513	3,417	3,242	3,263	3,463	3,119
9	4,172	3,726	3,453	3,369	3,210	3,240	3,449
10	4,289	4,009	3,603	3,363	3,302	3,168	3,221
11	4,415	4,019	3,797	3,452	3,255	3,233	3,136
12	4,364	4,084	3,770	3,607	3,324	3,174	3,191
K-6	25,553	23,950	23,037	22,432	22,059	22,398	23,551
7-12	24,690	22,874	21,362	20,356	19,859	19,416	18,785
K-12	50,223	46,824	44,399	42,788	41,918	41,814	42,336
Sp.Ed. & Alt. Programs	3,937	3,671	3,481	3,355	3,286	3,278	3,319
TOTAL	54,160	50,495	47,880	46,143	45,204	45,092	45,655

*1978 figures are official enrollment figures for November, 1978.

TABLE 5, 3 of 4

GRADE	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
K	4,187	4,341	4,504	4,666	4,830	5,005
1	4,030	4,187	4,341	4,504	4,666	4,830
2	3,860	4,030	4,187	4,341	4,504	4,666
3	3,664	3,860	4,030	4,187	4,341	4,504
4	3,385	3,664	3,860	4,030	4,187	4,341
5	3,212	3,385	3,664	3,860	4,030	4,187
6	2,933	3,212	2,385	3,664	3,860	4,030
7	2,467	2,933	3,212	3,385	3,664	3,860
8	2,669	2,467	2,933	3,212	3,385	3,664
9	3,119	2,669	2,467	2,933	3,212	3,385
10	3,449	3,119	2,669	2,467	2,933	3,212
11	3,221	3,449	3,119	2,669	2,467	2,933
12	3,136	3,221	3,449	3,119	2,669	2,467
K-6	25,271	26,679	27,971	29,252	30,418	31,563
7-12	18,071	17,858	17,849	17,785	18,330	19,521
K-12	43,332	44,537	45,820	47,037	48,748	51,084
Sp. Ed. & Alt. Programs	3,397	3,492	3,592	3,688	3,822	4,005
TOTAL	46,729	48,029	49,412	50,725	52,570	55,089

TABLE 5, 4 of 4

TABLE 6

MEMBERSHIP SUMMARY*

(1968-1981)

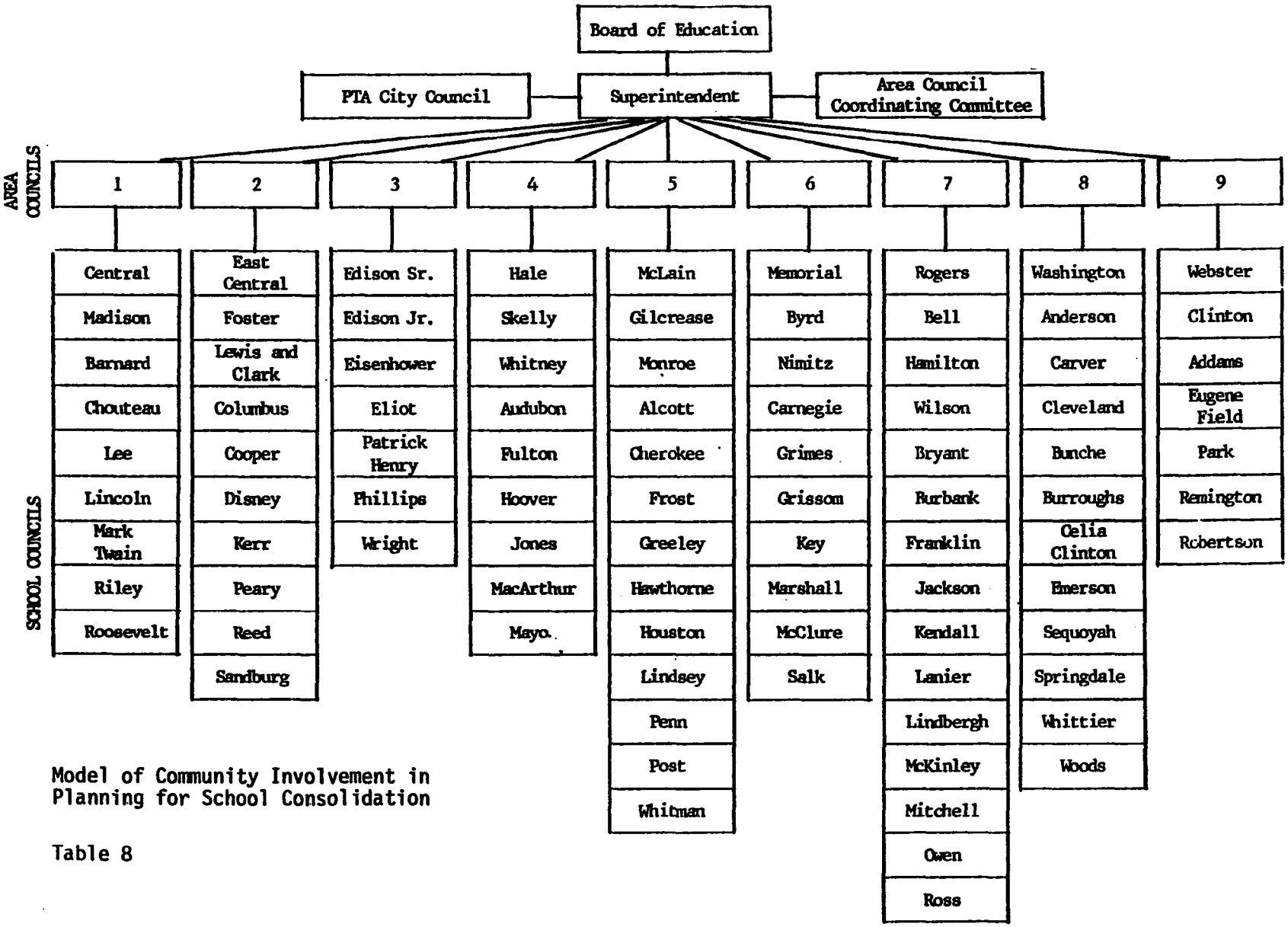
GRADES	1968-69	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82	CHANGE (1968-81)
K-6	45,441	29,510	28,350	26,864	26,662	-18,779 (-41%)
7-9	18,655	12,905	11,851	11,084	11,252	- 7,403 (-40%)
10-12	16,020	13,071	12,405	11,427	10,671	- 5,349 (-33%)
TOTAL	80,116	55,486	52,606	49,375	48,585	-31,531 (-39%)

*Includes all pupils, grades K-12 and Special Education, enrolled at the end of the first quarter.

TABLE 7

MEMBERSHIP PROJECTIONS
(1982-1991)

GRADES	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	1991-92
K-6	26,515	26,333	26,525	27,052	27,991	35,437
7-9	11,233	11,285	10,844	10,464	9,949	10,055
10-12	10,005	9,618	9,668	9,652	9,684	8,116
TOTAL	47,753	47,236	47,037	47,168	47,624	53,685



Model of Community Involvement in Planning for School Consolidation

Table 8

TABLE 9

AREA PLANNING COUNCIL
CONSOLIDATION PLAN

Area Planning Council _____ Date _____

1. List the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all area planning council members.

2. List the date, time and place of each area planning council meeting held to develop this plan.

3. Describe the underenrollment problem, and the school(s) involved, which prompted the development of this plan.

4. Describe the consolidation plan which the area planning council recommends to the superintendent. Report which schools are affected, the grade levels included, number of students involved, etc. (If any of these schools are outside your area, you must also have the signed approval of the officers of that area planning council.

5. State how this plan will (a) expand learning opportunities for students and (b) reduce per pupil operational costs.

6. Explain whether this plan would have a neutral or a positive impact on desegregation. (A plan which is adverse to desegregation cannot be considered.)

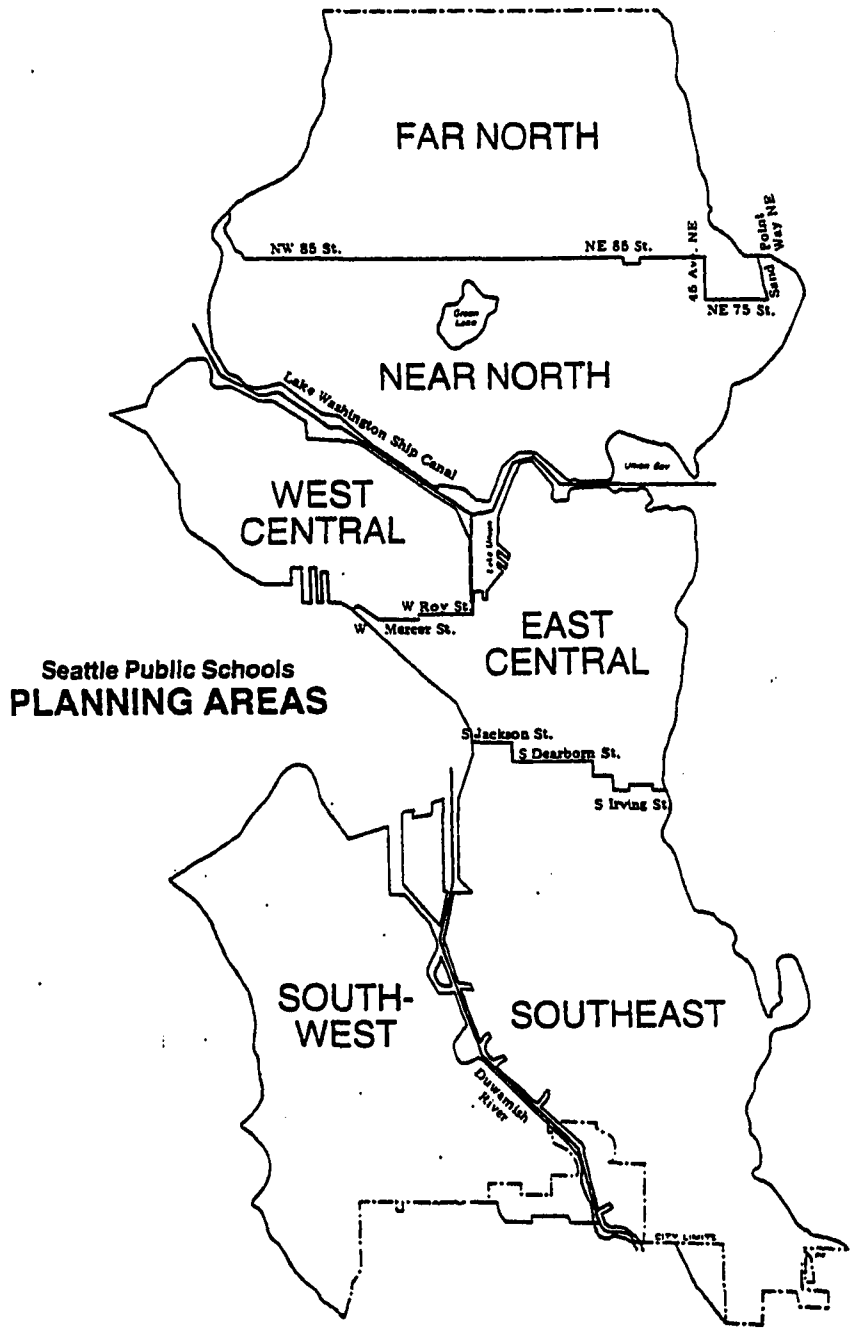
7. Show the time schedule of events for implementing this plan.

8. Signatures of area planning council officers.

_____ _____
Chairperson

_____ _____
Secretary

NOTE: This format is suggested for use by each area planning council. A consolidation plan is to be submitted to the superintendent of schools not later than January following the first quarter membership report when a school drops below the recommended minimums.



Seattle, Washington Geographic Planning Area

Figure 1

COMPOSITION OF
SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL

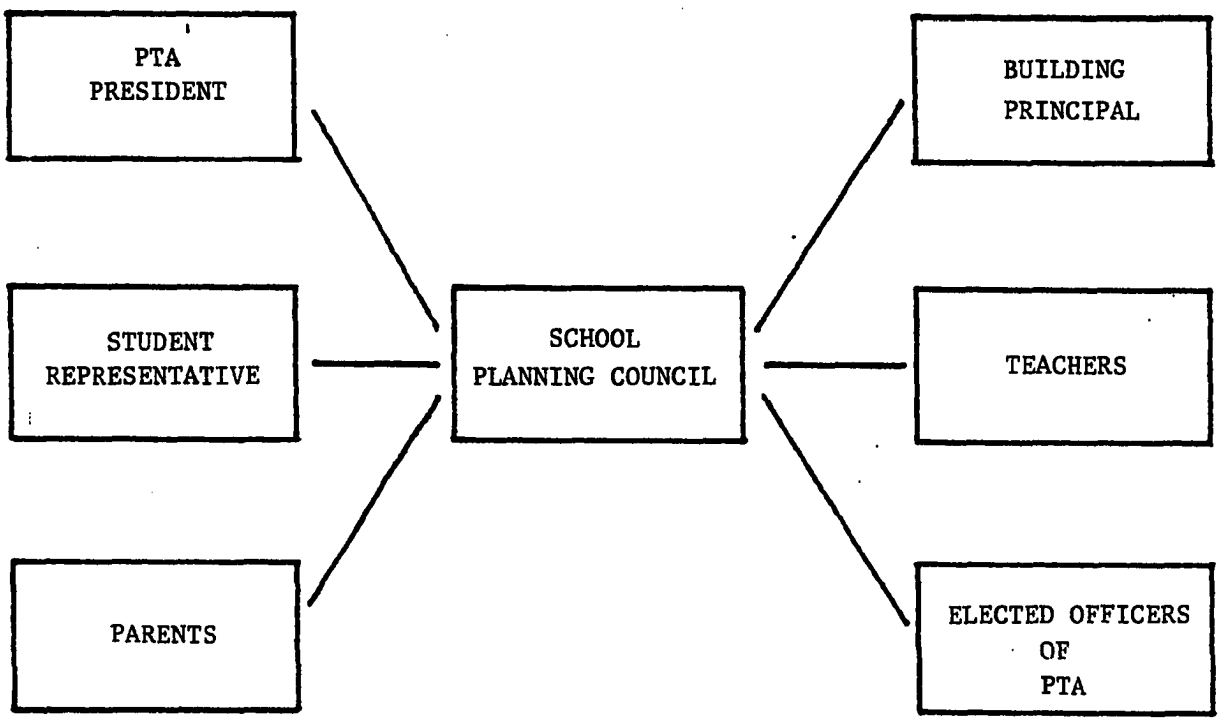
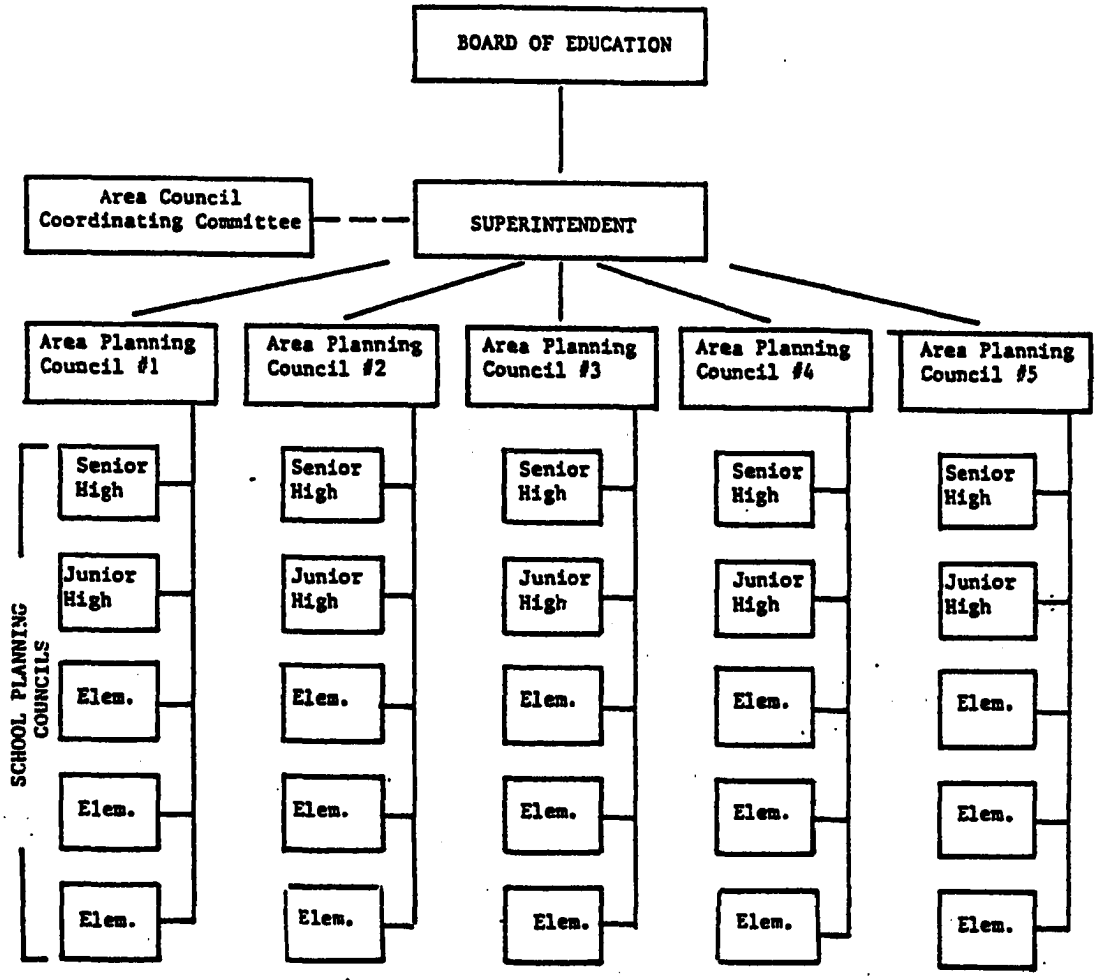


FIGURE 2



MODEL OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
IN PLANNING FOR SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION

Figure 3

COMPOSITION OF AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

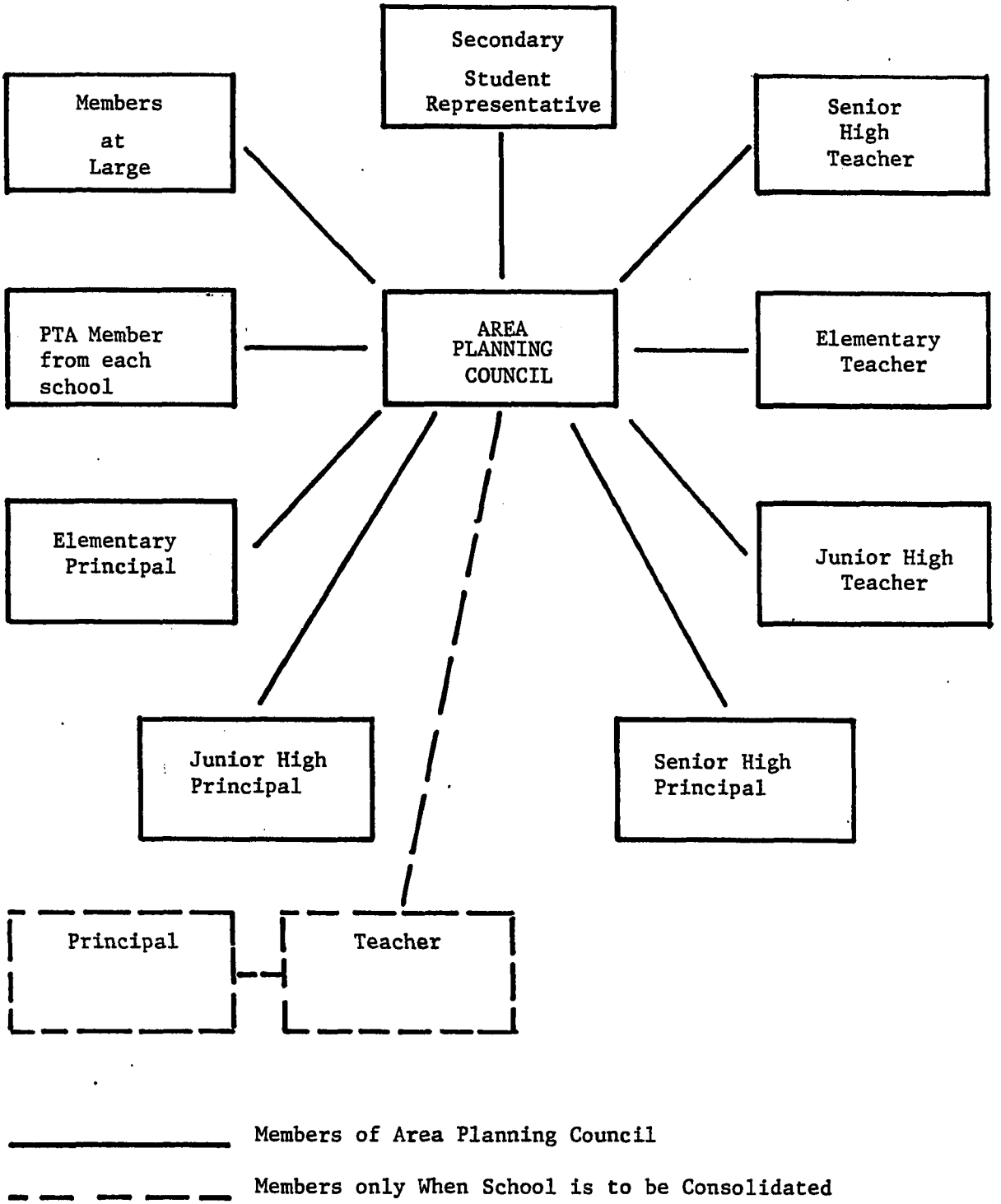


FIGURE 4

COMPOSITION OF COORDINATING COMMITTEE

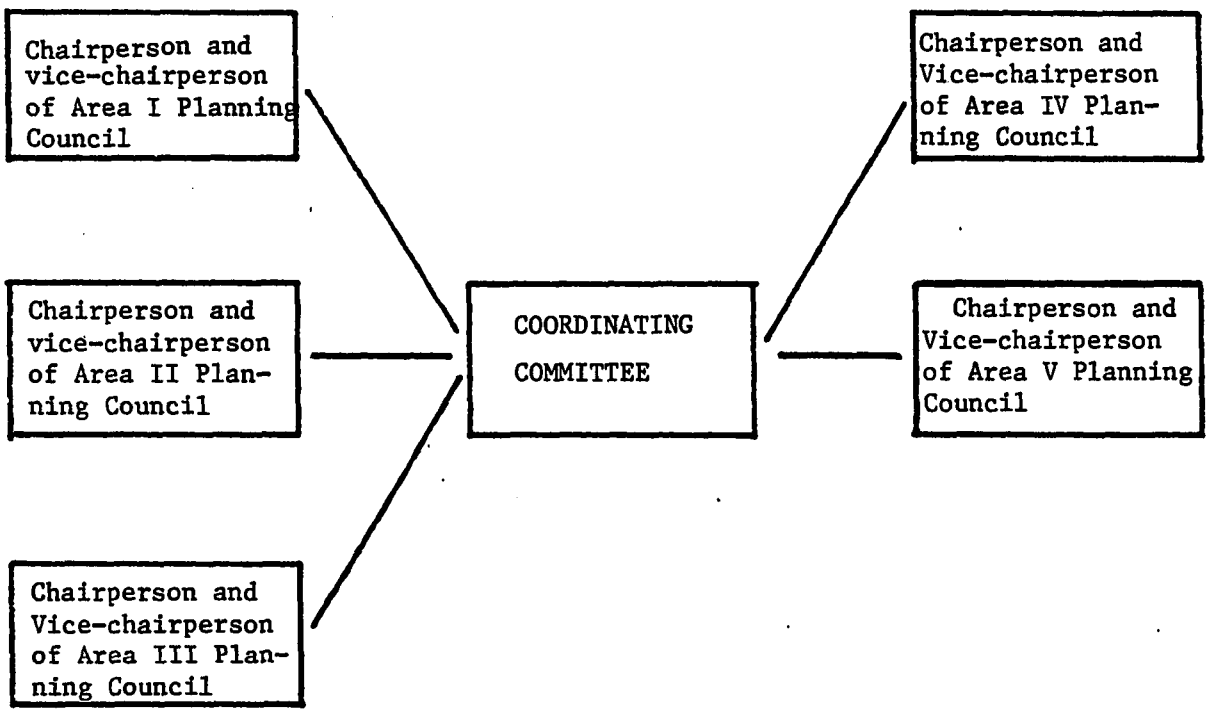


FIGURE 5

MODEL FOR CLOSING SCHOOLS

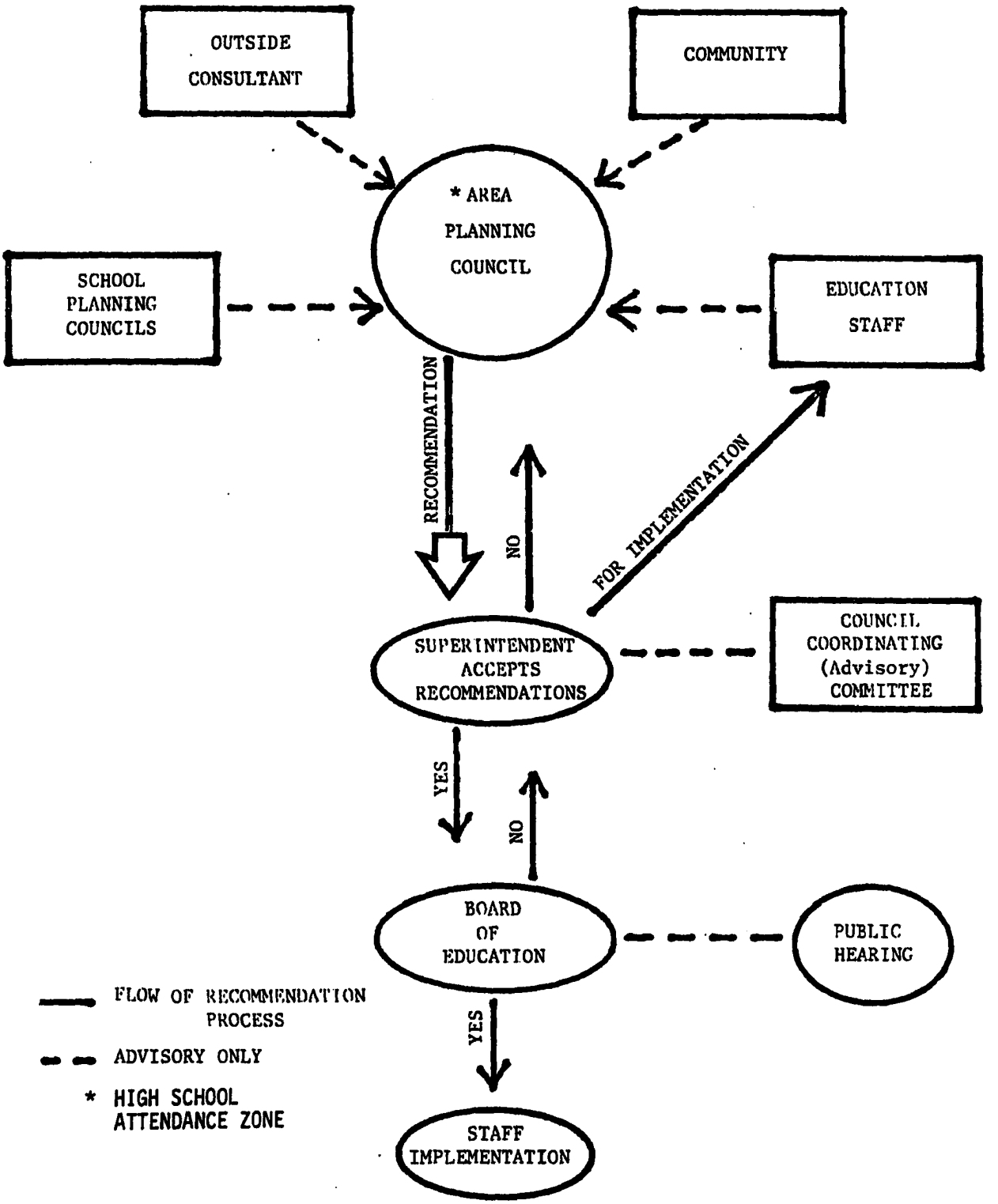


FIGURE 6

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

January 11, 1983

Dr. Larry L. Zenke, Superintendent
Tulsa Public Schools
P.O. Box 45208
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74145

Dear Dr. Zenke:

The Memorial Area Planning Council herewith submits for your consideration our recommendation regarding Bates Elementary School, a Priority I school under the Master Plan.

We recognize the seriousness of our task and the necessity of arriving at a proposal which would reflect the opinion of the majority of the council members as well as provide the best possible educational opportunities for the students attending the schools involved while also taking into consideration the financial situation. We believe that all possible alternatives were considered, and we further believe the attached proposal is the right choice. We know it has the support of a majority of the Bates patrons.

We very much appreciate the support and cooperation of the Education Service Center staff in supplying us the necessary data, and we are grateful for the opportunity to have input into the decisions being made regarding our area. The community involvement has been a source of positive reinforcement for us, and we have all learned from each other.

We shall await with great interest the disposition of our recommendation. If implemented, we shall closely follow the progress of consolidation.

Yours very truly,
MEMORIAL AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

Chairman

MEMORIAL AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

CONSOLIDATION PLAN FOR BATES ELEMENTARY

DECEMBER 28, 1982

I. The names, addresses and telephone numers of all Memorial Area Planning Council members are listed in Attachment A.

II. The date, time and place of each Memorial Area Planning Council meeting and each Priority I Study Committee meeting held to develop this plan are given in Attachment B.

III. Bates Elementary opened the 1982-83 school year with 120 students K - 6. At the end of the first quarter, the enrollment had dropped to 114. Fifty-seven Bates area students are enrolled at other elementary schools. This low enrollment is due primarily to area apartments adopting an adult-only policy for renters. The Bates area has no prospect for the development of single-family dwellings. The area north of 46th Street bounded by Sheridan to the west, Skelly Drive and the MK & T Railroad to the north, and 89th East Avenue to the east is zoned for industrial and commercial use. Therefore, any growth potential lies in the resale of existing housing and the conversion of existing apartments to include families.

The low enrollment has necessitated a decrease in the Bates Elementary staff to the current level of a principal, five full-time teachers, one half-day kindergarten teacher, and one learning disabilities teacher.

IV. The Memorial Area Planning Council recommends that Bates Elemenary be closed at the end of the 1982-83 academic year and the

Bates area students be reassigned to Salk Elementary. The Council further recommends that Bates students have a guaranteed option of attending Key Elementary. There are two primary reasons this proposal was supported over the other proposals:

A. The Bates parents supported this proposal;

B. The Council desires to retain as many of the Bates students in Area 6 as possible.

Bates Elementary is located approximately 1.0 miles from Salk Elementary. The two schools share a joint boundary on 51st Street between Sheridan and Memorial. Salk has a current enrollment of 322. With 65,922 square feet of building space, Salk can accommodate 925 students (based on 25 students per teaching post); therefore, even with the combined enrollment of approximately 430, Salk has ample space to accommodate substantial area growth should the apartments in the Bates area open to children in the future. Combining the two areas will require the transportation of only the northern most portion of the Bates area between Sheridan and 72nd East Avenue. The Regency Park area (east of Memorial and north of 51st Street) is currently bused to Bates, and this area will continue to need transportation to Salk. One bus can service the two areas. It is hoped that students living within the 1.5 miles range of Salk be allowed transportation on a space available basis.

Since the majority of the Bates area students will not be provided with bus transportation, it is essential a safe means for crossing 51st Street be provided. Because of the deep concern for the

safety of the students, the Memorial Area Planning Council request the installation of a traffic light for pedestrian crossing on 51st Street between 70th East Avenue and 74th East Avenue. This light should have a pedestrian actuated push-button red light for pedestrians who choose to cross 51st Street, with a minimum operating time of 7:00 am to 9:00 pm, Monday through Friday. A continuously available pedestrian crossing light is vital to making the current Bates area an integral part of the Salk neighborhood. This directly reinforces extra student activities by providing a safe crossing for the older children. Both before and after school a crossing guard should be available for the students crossing 51st Street. Assuming one full bus load is transported, there will still be about 70 to 75 students who will need to cross 51st Street (26 from the Bates current enrollment plus about 45 who have already transferred to Salk).

The Memorial Area Planning Council also recommends that the Bates faculty be assigned to the receiving school if appropriate. This matter should be left to the discretion of the receiving school principal. Also available materials and equipment should be made available to the receiving school if that school desires it.

The school building and grounds being vacated are a concern of the Council; therefore, the Memorial Area Planning Council recommends:

A. The future use of the Bates building be restricted to beneficial community activities such as a police sub-station; library or media center for children (city, county or public school operated); preschool

or day care center; senior citizen activity center; private educational institution not in competition with the public schools.

B. The school grounds be maintained as a neighborhood park and playground.

V. This consolidation plan will expand learning opportunities by allowing a student body large enough to support separate teachers in each special subject area while eliminating the split classes which are currently present at Bates. The per student cost should be reduced approximately $200.00.

VI. This consolidation plan will have a neutral effect on desegregation.

VII. Bates Elementary should remain open through the last day of the 1982-83 school year with the consolidation becoming effective with the opening day of the 1983-84 academic school year. Since the Bates Building Council requested they be given Priority I status at the September 27 Memorial Area Planning Council meeting in order to insure adequate time for a smooth transition, it is hoped that early action can be taken on this proposal.

VIII. Signatures of Memorial Area Planning Council officers and Chairman of the Priority I Study Committee:

Chairman

Vice-Chairman

Recorder

Chairman, Priority I, Committee

In the fall of 1982-83 school year the Area Planning Council was notified that the enrollment at Thoreau was 419, 31 students below the minimum enrollment and that it was forecasted to continue to decline. The Area Planning Council began to make consolidation plans. The principal and a teacher from Thoreau School Planning Council became voting members of the Area Planning Council at this time. The council studied the criteria and considered alternatives available. The Area Planning Council met seven times from November, 1982 through January 24, 1983. In addition, the study committees of the council met eight times. On January 24, 1983, the council submitted their recommendations to the superintendent that Thoreau be closed at the end of the school year and that the students be reassigned to Byrd Junior High. (See Appendix B.)

After studying the recommendations of the Area Planning Council and the information from the research and planning staff, the superintendent submitted his recommendation to the Board of Education on February 7, 1983 that the Thoreau Junior High School be closed and that the students be reassigned to the adjacent Byrd Junior High School. This was left open for public discussion. There was some opposition to this closing from the Thoreau patrons and some alternatives were considered at this time before a final decision was made by the Board of Education.

On February 17, 1983, the Board of Education received a letter (see Appendix C) from the Thoreau School Planning Council asking that the school be left open for another year while district-wide decisions were made regarding grade reorganization. The letter pointed out

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C

MEMORIAL AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

CONSOLIDATION PLAN FOR THOREAU JUNIOR HIGH

JANUARY 24, 1983

I. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of all Memorial Area Planning Council members are listed in Attachment A.

II. The date, time and place of each Memorial Area Planning Council meeting and each Priority I Study Committee meeting held to develop this plan are given in Attachment B.

III. Thoreau Junior High School enrollment as of the last day of the first quarter of the 1982-83 school year was 419 students. Over the last few years there has been a steady decline in enrollment, and this decline will continue for several more years according to the enrollment analysis provided by the Education Service Center.

Another significant factor considered in preparing this proposal was the enrollment forecast for Byrd Junior High School The Byrd Junior High School enrollment projection for the 1983-84 school year is 401 students, which would place it in Priority I status next year; therefore, this proposal was formulated to resolve the enrollment problems at both schools.

IV. The Memorial Area Planning Council recommends the consolidation of Thoreau and Byrd students at the Byrd Junior High School Building

in the 1983-84 school year. All three grades, seventh, eighth, and ninth, would be consolidated. The total enrollment projections for the combined schools are 806 students for the 1983-84 school year. Byrd Junior High School capacity is rated at approximately 1200 students, so there would be adequate classroom space. Accordingly, the Council recommends that the Thoreau Junior High School Building be closed at the end of the 1982-83 academic year.

The Council recommends that teachers and counselors from the Byrd and Thoreau facilities be consolidated. Further, that all positions determined by the Byrd administrator to be necessary to staff the enlarged student enrollment at Byrd be declared vacant and filled by the Byrd administrator giving first priority to the qualified teachers from the Byrd and Thoreau faculties who apply for those positions.

We further recommend that the personnel services division instruct all building principals to give Byrd and Thoreau teachers priority consideration for vacancies in other buildings through the district, for which said teachers are qualified.

To help achieve the enhanced learning opportunities of consolidation, we recommend that all equipment, supplies and books of the closed school be available first to Byrd Junior High School. Remaining materials should be made available to other Area 6 schools.

We recommend that the School Board and administration actively support placement of school crossing signals at locations described in Attachment C. We also recommend that the Thoreau building

and grounds be regularly maintained. The grounds should be maintained for use as playing fields for the neighborhood. We recommend that future use of the Thoreau Building be compatible with and acceptable to the neighborhood.

IV. The educational impact would be favorable. We have been advised by Education Service Center personnel that the optimum size for a junior high school is usually considered to be 750 to 900 students. A school of this size offers students opportunities not generally found in smaller schools. Some of these opportunities are expanded science, speech arts, journalism, foreign languages, advanced mathematics and computer science. Performing groups such as band, choir and drama can be more effective with the larger talent pool. In the larger school it is more likely that the teachers will be assigned to teach in their fields of major preparation. This specialization permits teachers to utilize their training more effectively and to do more intensive preparation for their classes. With more teachers available for the sponsorship of clubs and activities, the extracurricular offerings can be expanded. With a larger staff, students have a wider choice of teachers and classes, helping to avoid the occasional conflicts which develop. The greater number of teachers offers students the enrichment of experiencing the views and philosophies of different individual instructors.

A larger enrollment facilitates the grouping of students by ability and achievement where advisable to minister more adequately to individual rates and styles of learning. Greater variety and

more equipment for classes such as homemaking, industrial arts, physical education, business education and computer science can be justified by the larger enrollment.

Further, combining Thoreau and Byrd reunited two communities which were formerly one and should not be detrimental to the neighborhood school concept. Thus, reuniting the schools should retain community interest and support.

The Byrd facility should be large enough to house all students residing in the Thoreau and Byrd attendance areas including the additional students that may result from future development and/or a ruling by the Supreme Court that would eliminate "adults only" apartments. It appears to us that the Byrd School Building can still house the students in the English as a Second Language program and the students in the program for the handicapped, thus fully utilizing the facility.

The financial impact results in savings in the areas of faculty and staff salaries, utilities and maintenance, but increased costs in busing. The approximate savings by consolidation at Byrd Junior High School are $274,712 for the school year 1983-84 as determined by the Education Service Center personnel. Details of their financial analysis are included in the attached documents. (See Attachment D)

VI. This consolidation plan will have a neutral impact on desegregation.

VII. Thoreau Junior High School should remain open through the last day of 1982-83 school year with the consolidation becoming effective

with the opening day of the 1983-84 academic school year. We urge the Superintendent to give his recommendation to the School Board for action as early as possible in February. Prompt action by the School Board will allow the processes necessary to orient parents to the new school, to meet and enroll students, to build the master schedule of classes, to designate teaching assignments and to schedule students and classes to be implemented at the earliest possible date.

VIII. Signatures of Memorial Area Planning Council officers and Chairman of the Priority I Study Committee:

Chairman

Vice-Chairman

Recorder

Chairman, Priority I Committee

Attachment A

1982 - 1983

MEMORIAL AREA PLANNING COUNCIL MEMBERS

PARENTS FROM EACH SCHOOL

Memorial	Shirley Beckemeier	7323 E. 53rd Pl.,74145	663-5666
Byrd	Mary Ann Smith	5822 S. 78th E. Ave.,74145	622-9158
Nimitz	Linda Wise	6252 S. Victor, 74136	743-5408
Thoreau	Larry Grider	6112 S. Joplin Ave.,74136	494-9786
Bates	John Travers	4605 S. 66th E.Ave.,74145	627-1287
Carnegie	Rachel Maze	3417 E. 57th St.,74135	749-7000
Grimes	Denise Brice	3127 E. 61st St.,74105	743-0767
Grissom	Sherry McKee	7201 E. 64th St.,74133	492-9392
Key	Gary Rosenwald	6004 E. 52nd Pl.,74135	627-5228
Marshall	Penny Fruth	1645 E. 54th St.,74105	747-9615
McClure	Virginia Melikian	5423 S. Zunis Pl.,74145	494-9753

THREE PRINCIPALS

Senior High	Betty Sprankle	Memorial	494-3812
Junior High	Wayne Kendall	Nimitz	743-6696
Elementary	Jerry Carr	Salk	627-2168

THREE TEACHERS

Senior High	Cliff Shea	Memoiral	494-3812
Junior High	Kenneth VanEron	Byrd	627-2616
Elementary	Charlotte Erwin	Grimes	743-9719

THREE MEMBERS-AT-LARGE FROM EACH JUNIOR HIGH AREA

Byrd	Forest Reece	4715 S. 68th E.Ave.,74145	622-2754
Nimitz	Don Nelson	2695 E. 66th Pl.,74136	492-9451
Thoreau	Kathy Purser	6772 S. 69th E. Ave.,74133	494-8857

PRIORITY I MEMBERS

Bates	John Eddings	Principal	663-5421
Bates	Kay Dickerson	Teacher	663-5221
Thoreau	Leo Turner	Principal	252-2536
Thoreau	Dolores Ritter	Teacher	252-2536

DE FACTO PRIORITY I MEMBERS

Byrd	M. S. Domingos	Principal	627-2616
Byrd	Helen Harris	Teacher	627-2616

Attachment B

DATE, TIME, PLACE OF EACH

MEMORIAL AREA PLANNING COUNCIL MEETING

September 27, 1982	7:30 p.m.	Memorial
October 11, 1982	7:30 p.m.	Memorial
October 25, 1982	7:30 p.m.	Memorial
November 8, 1982	7:30 p.m.	Memorial
November 22, 1982	7:30 p.m.	Salk
December 6, 1982	7:30 p.m.	Salk
December 13, 1982	7:30 p.m.	Thoreau
January 3, 1983	7:30 p.m.	Byrd
January 10, 1983	7:30 p.m.	Nimitz
January 24, 1983	7:30 p.m.	Nimitz

DATE, TIME, PLACE OF EACH

BATES PRIORITY I STUDY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

October 13, 1982	7:30 p.m.	Bates
November 10, 1982	4:00 p.m.	Bates

DATE, TIME, PLACE OF EACH

THOREAU PRIORITY I STUDY COMMITTEE MEETING

November 15, 1982	5:30 p.m.	Thoreau
November 22, 1982	6:30 p.m.	Salk
November 29, 1982	6:00 p.m.	Thoreau
December 2, 1982	6:30 p.m.	Thoreau
December 6, 1982	6:00 p.m.	Salk
December 13, 1982	6:30 p.m.	Thoreau
December 30, 1982	7:00 p.m.	Springer Clinic
January 3, 1983	6:30 p.m.	Byrd

Attachment C

SCHOOL CROSSING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. East 61st Street South at
   South 72nd East Avenue

2. South Sheridan Road at
   East 57th Street South

Attachment D

ANALYSIS OF THOREAU JUNIOR HIGH CONSOLIDATION PROPOSALS

The Area Six Planning Council Study Committee has offered three proposals for the consolidation of Thoreau Junior High School. This analysis seeks to project both the financial and the educational impact of each proposal.

As a basis for this analysis, the current and the projected fall membership for each school for the next two years is shown below.

1982-1983

	7	8	9	TOTAL
Thoreau	125	156	138	419*
Byrd	144	149	161	454
TOTAL	269	305	299	873

	7	8	9	TOTAL
Nimitz	262	225	192	679

	10	11	12	TOTAL
Memorial	516	511	494	1,521

1983-1984

	7	8	9	TOTAL
Thoreau	135	130	140	405*
Byrd	123	141	137	401
TOTAL	258	271	277	806

	7	8	9	TOTAL
Nimitz	238	265	215	718

	10	11	12	TOTAL
Memorial	505	496	499	1,500

1984-1985

	7	8	9	TOTAL
Thoreau	114	140	117	371*
Byrd	102	121	130	353
TOTAL	216	261	247	724

	7	8	9	TOTAL
Nimitz	190	240	252	682

	10	11	12	TOTAL
Memorial	492	480	484	1,456

* Not including Shadow Mountain students

Financial Impact

Staffing:

Staff members are allocated on a uniform basis for all schools. This school year, for example, one regular teacher was assigned for each 25 students of a school's projected enrollment. The staff allocation for Thoreau and Byrd for 1982-83 are shown below.

	Thoreau	Byrd	TOTAL
Principals	1	1	2
Assistant Principals	1	1	2
Counselors	2	2	4
Librarians	1	1	2
Teachers - Regular	18-1/2	18	36-1/2
Teachers - Special Ed and Gifted	2	2-1/2	4-1/2
Clerks - 10 month	2	2	4
Custodians	3	4	7
Aides	1	0	1

Salaries:

The following salaries are used throughout this analysis to compute estimated salary costs. These are average salaries, not including fringe benefits, for each class of employees for the 1982-83 school year.

Senior High Principal	$ 45,109.08
Senior High Assistant Principal	36,375.81
Senior High Counselor	25,153.05
Junior High Principal	40,266.81
Junior High Assistant Principal	34,714.96
Junior High Counselor	24,794.30
Librarian	23,718.05
Teacher - Regular	23,718.05
Teacher - Special Education	24,903.95
Clerk - 10 month	10,163.70
Custodian	12,666.57
Aide	4,114.56

Utilities:

An additional factor which must be considered is the cost of utilities. Shown below are the actual cost for electricity and gas for Thoreau and Byrd for the 1981-82 school year, plus 25% which is the expected increase for 1982-83.

	1981-82		+25%		1982-83
Thoreau	$51,272.74	+	$12,818.19	=	$64,090.93
Byrd	$58,040.23	+	$14,510.06	=	$72,550.29

Maintenance:

Because it varies so much from year to year and from building to building, it is difficult to estimate the cost to maintain a given building. However, the district-wide cost of maintenance in 1981-82 for all Tulsa Public Schools averaged 62¢ per square foot of floor space. Using this factor, the estimated maintenance cost of these schools is as follows:

Thoreau	94,460 sq. ft. @ 62¢ =	$58,565.20
Byrd	128,733 sq. ft. @ 62¢ =	$79,814.46

Transportation:

Whenever two schools are consolidated, the cost of transportating those students living more than 1-1/2 miles from their assigned schools must be considered. For the 1981-82 school year, the transportation cost for Tulsa averaged $394 per student, of which the state reimbursed the district $61, leaving a cost to the Tulsa Public Schools of approximately $333 per student transported at district expense.

Proposal 1

"Close Thoreau and consolidate grades 7, 8, and 9 in the Byrd building in the fall of 183."

Staffing:

		As two schools		As one school
Junior High Principals	2 =	$ 80,533.62	1 =	$ 40,266.81
Junior High Assitant Principals	2 =	69,429.92	1 =	34,714.96
Junior High Counselors	4 =	99,177.20	3 =	74,382.90
Librarians	2 =	47,436.10	1 =	23,718.05
Teachers - Regular	32 =	758,977.60	32 =	758,977.60
Teachers - Special Education	6-1/2 =	161,875.67	6 =	149,423.69
Clerks	4 =	40,654.80	3 =	30,491.10
Custodians	7 =	88,665.99	5 =	63,332.85
Aides	1 =	4,114.56	1 =	4,114.56
SUB-TOTAL		$1,350,865.20		$1,179,442.40
Fringe Benefits @ 12%		162,103.82		141,530.68
TOTAL		$1,512,969.02		$1,320,953.08

The savings in staffing costs would therefore be approximately $192,015.94.

Utilities:

Consolidation of students from both schools in the Byrd building would eliminate the utility costs for Thoreau at a savings of approximately $64, 090.93.

Maintenance:

Consolidation of students from both schools in the Byrd building would eliminate the maintenance costs for Thoreau at a savings of approximately $58,565.20.

Transportation:

Consolidation of the two schools in the Byrd building would require the transportation of an estimated 120 additional students, which at $333 per student would cost $39,960.00 per year.

Summary of Proposal 1:

Staffing	$192,015.94
Utilities	64,090.93
Maintenance	58,565.20
Transportation	-39,960.00
Estimated Net Annual Savings	$274,712.07*

*This does not include any savings which might be realized from the sale or lease of the Thoreau building.

Educational Impact

Proposals 1 and 2:

The educational impact of Proposals 1 and 2 should be essentially the same, since both involve the consolidation of grades 7, 8, and 9 from Thoreau and Byrd in one building. What is needed is a comparison of the advantages or disadvantages of a junior high school of just under 800 students versus a similar school of just under 400.

The optimum size for a junior high school is usually considered to be 750 to 900 students. It is believed that a school of this size offers students the following opportunities not possible in smaller schools.

1. More elective courses can be offered such as seventh grade science, speech, journalism, foreign languages and computer science. In a smaller school there are often too few students wanting a particular elective to justify setting up such a class. Or if such a course is offered with only ten or fifteen students, the class sizes in required courses such as English and math must be increased since all schools, regardless of size, are allocated one teacher for each 25 students.
2. Performing groups such as band, choir and drama can be more effective with the larger talent pool from which to draw. The same is true of TJAA sports, since athletic teams can certainly be more competitive with the combined student bodies of two schools.

3. In the larger school, it is less often necessary to assign teachers to teach two or more subjects or in two or more departments, often including a minor field. This specialization permits teachers to better utilize their talents and to do more intensive preparation for their classes.

4. With more teachers available for the sponsorship of clubs and activities, the extra-curricular offerings can be expanded.

5. With a larger staff, students have a greater choice of teachers. This helps not only to avoid the occasional personality conflicts which develop, but also offers students the enrichment of experiencing the views and philosophies of more different individual instructors.

6. A larger enrollment facilitates the grouping of students by achievement where such is deemed advisable to more adequately minister to individual rates and styles of learning.

7. More expensive equipment for classes such as homemaking, industrial arts, physical education, business education and computer science can be justified by the larger enrollment.

Schools as large as 750 are believed to have the following disadvantages.

1. The larger school is no longer viewed as a "neighborhood school" and there is a resulting loss of community interest and support.

2. The larger school is more impersonal and students get less individual attention.

3. The larger school gives students less opportunity to be recognized as leaders.

APPENDIX C

February 14, 1983

"OPEN LETTER"

TO: TULSA SCHOOL BOARD

FROM : THOREAU BUILDING COUNCIL

We take this opportunity in order that you more clearly understand our exact and true feelings concerning the proposals now before you for consideration.

Mr. Gary Watts sent the Area Six Planning Council a new suggestion on February 4 concerning his ideas about our dilemma by recommending a kindergarten through eighth grade program to be housed in the Byrd and Thoreau buildings. This is another good idea that was not discussed by our council or the Area Six Planning Council. We applaud Mr. Watts for taking this straight forward approach on an idea that had not been previously considered by the Area Six Planning Council.

This idea graphically illustrates what the rest of our letter will address; namely, that our Area Six Planning Council failed to follow all the processes as directed by the "Master Plan" for determining how school consolidations are to be accomplished. In fact the Area Six Planning Council deviated from or declined to address several of the most relevant parts of the "Master Plan". We cite these responsibilities as quoted from the "Master Plan" as follows:

QUOTE #1: "that a school is seriously cost ineffective when the cost per pupil exceeds 30% of the average for all pupils in Tulsa."

DISCUSSION - Thoreau is not a cost ineffective school and is not subsidized in any way. In fact, Thoreau is and has been a pacesetter in cost effectiveness for the school district.

QUOTE #2 "the student capacity of a building should also be an important factor" and "The Tulsa School System should strive to utilize school facilities at a minimum of 75% of capacity".

DISCUSSION - If the ninth grade is moved up to high school, the combined enrollment of Thoreau and Byrd in the 1983/84 school year is forecast to be 503 plus around 50 special students. This is only 33% of the capacity of Byrd (1,500 capacity) and represents 56% utilization of the Thoreau Building (900 capacity). If the handicapped program is added along with other students from other sources we approach 75 - 80% utilization at Thoreau but never reach or exceed 50% of capacity at Byrd.

QUOTE #3: "Any school considered for closing should be carefully evaluated on its own merits and not solely on the basis of rigid

across-the-board cost effectiveness statistics".

DISCUSSION - Thoreau is among the top of its class in Tulsa as well as nationally in achievement scores including the SAT scores.

QUOTE #4: "There should be a constant long range effort to keep the citizenry informed and involved in the planning".

DISCUSSION - The superintendent's eleventh-hour proposals concerning ninth grade reorganization is evidence of the lack of citizen participation in planning. In fact, the superintendent's proposal was made after the Area Six Planning Council rejected the Thoreau Council proposal to do the same thing. The Area Planning Councils, city wide, should have a five year plan developed by the superintendent's staff which address these issues and identifies the schools to be closed and/or utilized. This should be constantly updated and evaluated as we make long range decisions on school consolidations allowing study and alternatives considered years in advance of action.

QUOTE #5: "No school should be closed until all alternatives have been explored".

DISCUSSION - Obviously, as we see a flurry of last minute suggestions and recommendations all the alternatives were not explored.

QUOTE #6: "Continue to operate the small school regardless of how low the membership drops".

DISCUSSION - This was the number one proposal adopted by the Thoreau Council as expressed by the patrons to extend the status quo for one year. Our council presented evidence of future growth to Area Six Council which would alleviate Thoreau's priority one status, but the Area Six Council would not consider this alternative due to the superintendent's statement that this would be "no recommendation at all".

QUOTE #7: "The superintendent's staff will be available to analyze serious proposals".

DISCUSSION - Patrons presented several "serious proposals" to the Area Six Council and pleas were made to have the superintendent's staff rework obvious errors in their original analysis, but these were set aside and the staff was never queried. Thus, the Area Six Council acted without benefit of counsel from the staff or any analysis of additional proposals.

QUOTE #8: "The purpose of consolidating schools is (a) to expand learning opportunities for students and (b) to reduce per pupil operational costs. The merits of any consolidation proposal must therefore, be judged by these two criteria".

DISCUSSION - The Area Council did not discuss any expanded learning opportunities to be gained by a single large school, but was enamored with athletic prowess and deeper swimming pools. Per pupil operational costs were also ignored as it was demonstrated we would save an estimated $52,686 if we used the Thoreau building instead of Byrd due to increased utilities and maintenance of the larger building plus transportation costs for more students.

QUOTE #9: "Receiving Schools: are the facilities equal or superior to the one being closed?"

DISCUSSION - Thoreau is just ten years old this year is an excellent facility that is completely air conditioned and in good repair. Byrd on the other hand was built in 1966, is not completely air conditioned and will need major repairs in a few years.

QUOTE #10: Our final quote is one that must be addressed in concert with the patrons if in fact Thoreau is to be closed. "alternate uses for the facility"; "can the facility be converted to other schools uses? Could it be profitably sold for some purpose acceptable to the community? Could it be leased for community use without having an adverse financial impact on the school district?"

DISCUSSION - Both Thoreau and Byrd have community school programs that must some how be continued, as this type of community education has become one of the pathways to life-long learning. The Thoreau site is certainly one of the most successful in the city and has served 61,106 participants during its six years of existence. The Area Six Council did not address this question and we ask the School Board's cooperation in supporting the growth of a concept designed for the public good that has been so successful.

We join the Tulsa Community Schools in recommending to the School Board that if either Byrd or Thoreau is closed now or in the future that the building not be sold but leased to become a Community Service Center embracing several Tulsa service organizations. Leasing would also preserve a building for future use by service organizations. Leasing would also preserve a building for future use by the school district if needed again. We are all taxpayers in this venture and do not want these properties disposed of until all community alternatives are explored.

The Thoreau Council suggests to the Board of Education that Thoreau is a better option and the most economical to operate if these two junior high schools must be consolidated. However, it occurs to us that a long range plan is needed for the entire Tulsa Public School System in light of the new proposals by Dr. Zenke and Mr. Gary Watts. We implore you, the School Board, tell us what you want all the area councils to consider and let us maintain the status quo for another year. We need to explore these new proposals in depth and develop a five year plan

throughout the city with the full cooperation of the superintendent's staff and counsel. We MUST provide expanded learning opportunities for our children.

Sincerely,

Thoreau Junior High School
Building Council
Mr. Larry Grider, Chairman

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