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Report on administrative reorganization - central office, to be effective July 1, 1973. April 30, 1973

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April 30, 1973

Report On Administrative Reorganization - Central Office

To Be Effective July 1, 1973

History

In 1965 the Madison Public Schools expected to grow to approximately 43,000 students by the mid-70's. This has not occurred and enrollments will not accelerate and thus occur in the foreseeable future. Much of the organizational structure of the central office was designed to accommodate the anticipated 43,000 enrollment. Staff support services, federal projects and staffing patterns all reflect this intention. Now that it is quite clear that the enrollment will continue to decline, it is incumbent upon those concerned with management that they reorganize the operations and continue to provide needed service.

To provide a better focus, the curriculum department grew from a handful of people to a total of 60 employees. Careful scrutiny of this work force indicates that the same functions can be supplied with a different organizational pattern and with fewer employees.

It is also clear that needs arise in different areas of service and then recede as programs and/or personnel change. To continue existing structure because "we have always had it" makes no sense.

The following reorganizational format has been developed through a series of system analysis studies. These studies clearly show the need for reorganization for purposes of efficiency.

I. Curriculum Department

- A. Re-name Research and Development
- B. 5.0 Plan

II. Management Information Services

A. Re-name Administrative Services

B. New Responsibilities

1. Processing all instructional materials

- a. films - including distribution
- b. library book processing
- c. text and supplemental material processing
- d. technical support of audio-visual needs

III. Elimination of Director of Federal Projects Position

(Incorporated in Research and Development and one secretary also assigned to Research and Development.)

IV. Assignment of Curriculum Personnel to Areas

	LaFollette	East	West	Memorial
Number of people	1	3	2.5	2

These people will function as curriculum generalists as described under I. Please note that each area will have a Reading Consultant assigned.

V. Personnel Department

(Final report will be presented following completion of screening of candidates for Director position and with the recommendation of the new Director.)

VI. Personnel Changes

- Reductions: 1.0 custodian - central office
- 1.0 building services
- 4.9 secretaries - curriculum
- 2.0 administrative assistants
- 5.5 curriculum coordinators
- .5 audio-visual technician
- 1.0 audio-visual supervisor

Textbooks - innumeration -

Total - \$247,000

Reorganization: printing services

\$12,000 reduction in overtime

VII. 1972 Audit Report - May or June

This report will include a breakdown on unexpended funds so actual expenditure reductions or revenue increases can be identified.

Douglas S. Ritchie

DSR:ck

A PLAN FOR THE INTEGRATION
OF CURRICULUM SUPPORT SERVICES

February, 1973

1.0 Introduction

The Madison Public Schools is at a crossroads. Student enrollment has begun to drop at a rate of about 1,000 per year. Simultaneously, the taxpayer's revolt, long active in poorer communities, is beginning to affect Madison, not only through reduced state and federal aids, but also through the reckoning for accountability brought by local groups. Clearly, the mandate in the years ahead must be to (1) reduce budget concomitant with reductions in enrollment, and (2) use remaining resources even more efficiently to maintain the quality educational program which the community has come to expect.

Program development is one area of the Madison Public Schools operation where increased efficiency and reduced overhead can be effected. A look at history tells why. During the 1960's and early 70's, the Madison Public Schools assembled and maintained a large centralized curriculum department charged with the responsibility of developing educational programs. Armed with large transfusions of federal money, the personnel in this department produced a frenzy of change activity. Every major curriculum area had a coordinator and a five-year plan for effecting substantial change. Federally funded in-service, local materials, and curriculum development projects flourished routinely. Title I funds gave impetus to change. And new textbooks, supplementary materials, and IMC concepts brought change from yet another direction. A major effort, spawned out of the post-Sputnik era, was underway to effect massive changes in the educational

program of the Madison Public Schools, an effort not at all unlike what was happening in thousands of other school systems across the country. One need only look at one of the annual Instructional Improvement Reports of the late 60's to realize the amount of change going on at any one time in the Madison Public Schools.

But not unlike other social reform movements, this movement has run its course. It has run out of energy. Looking back, it seems obvious that the movement produced beneficial changes in the educational program of the Madison Public Schools. What is not so obvious at first glance, however, is that the change process was expensive and less than totally effective. The next section explains why.

2.0 The Old Change Model

The basic change model used by the Madison Public Schools during the late 60's and early 70's was quite straightforward. The Director of Curriculum and his staff of coordinators controlled the planning and development of new educational programs; the Directors of Instruction and their staffs of principals and teachers controlled the implementation of new educational programs. Evaluation of new programs, unfortunately, was seldom claimed by either Curriculum or Instruction, since most staff lacked the skills to tackle it. This process of change seemed to present the following problems:

- 2.1. The process was relatively ineffective, and thus inefficient and costly. One study conducted in the school system led to

the conclusion that no more than 21% of the developed curricula was ever totally implemented with children.

- 2.2. The efforts of the Curriculum Department produced a "laundry list" of changes which the Instructional staff could not implement all at once. Changes came too thick and fast. The system, in effect, was over-stimulated. Many staff were overwhelmed, became disillusioned, and then withdrew. Hence, the 21% figure. There was no control mechanism to convert the "laundry list" into a system of change.
- 2.3. Even more basically, the dichotomy between the Planning/Development Process and the Implementation/Evaluation Process resulted in a constant unhealthy dissonance between professional staff in the field and professional staff in the central office. The root cause of that dissonance lay in the frustration of the field staff (teachers and principals) over being held accountable for implementing curricula over which they had little planning and development control. They were thus seemingly forced to implement programs they did not identify with or believe in (other people's programs).
- 2.4. The old change model over-primed the pump. As the curriculum department and other central office departments began to "do their thing," personnel in the schools were not to be out-done. Thus, individual schools began experimenting, piloting, and

changing. Most curriculum department personnel perceived these as brush fires, to be quenched, back fired, or fed, depending on the perception of the individual coordinator. Thus, curriculum personnel became increasingly ineffective as they tried to not only "do their thing" or "their director's thing," but also donned their fireman's hat at every turn to control change initiative from the field.

- 2.5. The Curriculum staff and the Instructional staff were organizationally incompatible. Curriculum coordinators were hired as K-12 specialists to provide vertical articulation of program. Their efforts were met with frustration, however, because the Instructional people were organized horizontally: separate directors of elementary and secondary education, and later, separate directors of elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools.
- 2.6. Changing the instructional process was all too often viewed simplistically. It was assumed that changing curriculum documentation, substituting new materials, or offering an in-service workshop was enough to stimulate change. However, tinkering does not produce substantial change. And often, because resources were spread thin to fuel the vast laundry list of change, individual staff could do little more than tinker. The lesson seems simple: Instruction is a complex process made up of numerous interdependent subsystems. All

of these subsystems must receive attention if substantial change is to occur.

- 2.7. In the age of plenty, there was relatively little concern by the curriculum staff for the cost/benefit implications of new programs or old programs. Hard questions of "Do we need it?", "What's it going to cost?", "How will we evaluate?" were seldom heard. And the educational program grew bigger and bigger.
- 2.8. Because the curriculum department was organized by academic disciplines, change efforts tended to be structured that way. Less, if any, attention was given by curriculum specialists to sources of curriculum change emanating from society or the individual student and his needs. For example, no major systematic curricular efforts were spawned to deal with such societal needs as creativity, interpersonal relationships, human valuing, or critical thinking. And some that were, for example, health education, drug education, smoking education, and interdisciplinary education were viewed more as alien intruders than as vested interests.

3.0 A New Change Model

It seems obvious that what the Madison Public Schools needs is a new process for improving the educational program. Hopefully, such a process should eliminate most of the problems already alluded to without contributing too many new ones. It appears as though organiza-

tional changes currently underway harbor that new model. Specifically, some steps have already been taken:

1. The reorganization of the instructional division (schools) to provide for vertical articulation and to "marry" the locus of control and the locus of accountability in one place.
2. The development of a research/evaluation mission.
3. The development of a resource allocation decision system to control cost/benefit issues.

This document proposes a plan for adding an additional component to the new change model: an operating system for integrating curriculum support services. The next section outlines the objectives of such a system.

4.0 Goals

The remaining narrative will outline the plan for integrating curriculum support services. In this section the goals of such an operating system are outlined. Where necessary, comments are added to further explain individual goals.

- 4.1 To place professional resources in the attendance area where the action and the data are.
- 4.2 To insure that administrators and teachers being held accountable for program success have rational rather than political access to resources.

This goal addresses itself to the problem of locus of political control. It is the dilemma that has accounted for the "bad guy"

image of the curriculum department and for the development/implementation breakdown. The maxim is clear: those who are to be held accountable must also have control.

4.3 To build a support services team that is help and support oriented rather than control and manipulation oriented.

The curriculum department will continue to be a thorn in the side of teachers and administrators so long as it perceives itself as the guardian of the curriculum and the only source of authoritative opinion on curriculum. Many in the department unconsciously, if not consciously, seek to control curriculum development in their content areas. Most would insist that they are helping teachers and administrators every day. But as Karl Rogers says, "Help that is not perceived as help is not help." Neither the director of curriculum nor his staff can be oriented to doing their thing, and they are.

4.4 To insure that resources are brought to bear on issues and problems in an accountable manner.

Unlike most school systems, Madison has much less trouble "priming the pump" than "controlling the flow." Most administrators and teachers feel that there is too much change being attempted at one time and with some justification. We need to place a stronger emphasis on systematic planning, development, implementation and evaluation in the field. We need to firmly control the amount of research and developmental activity on-

going at any one time, not only to reduce wasteful overhead, but also to insure that change does actually occur.

- 4.5 To provide a mechanism that will allow professional resources to be shifted to problems and projects in any of the attendance areas efficiently and fairly.

Problems and needs today are hard to predict; one of our current problems is that we have an organizational structure and resource pool in the curriculum department that was rigidly assembled for a highly centralized program development thrust. Now we are demonstrating our inflexibility and inability to adjust. A new organizational system that is equally as rigid represents little improvement over the long haul. System renewal and flexibility must be the watch word. We need fewer permanent human resources and more temporary resources.

- 4.6 To insure that resource allocation decisions are made rationally on the basis of data.

This really relates to the argument of formative as opposed to summative accountability. Summative accountability is "after the fact." It means being accountable for major decisions after they have been made. Formative accountability means being held accountable for the decision-making process: the planning that results in a plan, the data-gathering, the needs assessing, etc., leading up to sound decision-making. Both types of accountability are necessary.