

Equity and the Change Agent

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Established in January, 1986, by a grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and additional funds from the University of Michigan, the Program in Conflict Management Alternatives supports an agenda of research, application, and theory development. The Program also establishes links and collaboration among other University research and teaching efforts relevant to conflict management alternatives. The Program staff's own work focusses explicitly on: (a) the use of innovative settlement procedures and roles for disputants and third parties; (b) the institutionalization of innovative mechanisms and the adoption of organizational and community structures that permanently alter the way conflicts are managed; and (c) the fundamental differences and inequalities between parties that often create conflict and threaten its stable resolution.

We examine these issues primarily in United States' settings, in conflicts arising within and between families, organizations and communities, and between different racial, gender, and economic constituencies. The Program in Conflict Management Alternatives is housed within the Center for Research on Social Organization, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. Its main office is Room 4016 LSA Building (Telephone: 763-0472 and 764-7487).

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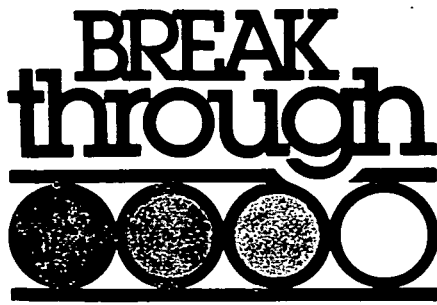
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EQUITY AND THE CHANGE AGENT

Mark A. Chesler

This Working Paper is reproduced, with an introduction by Dr. Charles Moody, from a recent issue of BREAKTHROUGH, a publication of the Program for Educational Opportunity, University of Michigan.

This paper is included in the Working Paper Series of the Program on Conflict Management Alternatives because the change-agent considerations and tactics it discusses are relevant to persons intervening in a wide variety of disputes within and between organizations and communities. The focus on educational equity is one example of our concern with social justice and equity throughout social institutions, and with the management or resolution of conflicts that arise from attempts to maintain or eradicate inequality and injustice in relationships, in the allocation of public resources or in life opportunities.



EQUITY AND THE CHANGE AGENT

FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

Charles D. Moody, Sr.

Bringing about educational equity in schools is often a complex and difficult task. Such endeavors frequently involve school district officials, community representatives and external agencies all of which work collaboratively to find effective approaches for bringing about change.

The purpose of this issue of *Breakthrough* is to review some of the principles and processes that may be used by those responsible for introducing and institutionalizing new equity programs, policies, and forms of individual and organizational behavior in schools. These approaches are the ones PEO employs as it works collaboratively with local school and community groups across the Midwest as they design, implement, and evaluate interventions for educational equity.

The Primer that begins on the next page is based on a document prepared by PEO Program Associate Mark Chesler. Dr. Chesler is Professor of Sociology at The University of Michigan and Project Director at the Center for Research on Social Organization. He is a nationally recognized authority on social and organizational change, having worked extensively in the field as well as authoring numerous books and articles on the subject.

While Dr. Chesler's original work was written for those consultants serving as external change agents, we felt that the prin-

ciples reflected in it would be of interest to a wider audience of educational practitioners.

Dr. Elizabeth Mimms of PEO's staff has reorganized and revised portions of the original paper to make it more appropriate for this broader audience. In doing so, she has attempted to retain the substance and general thrust and orientation of Dr. Chesler's work. Her able and conscientious efforts to this end are gratefully acknowledged.

We hope that you will find this Primer a useful review of important planned change principles and a convenient introduction to PEO's systematic approach to equity technical assistance.

Inside This Issue...	
Introduction	2
I. Conducting An Organizational Diagnosis	2
A. What is an Organizational Diagnosis and Why is it Conducted?	2
B. When Should a Diagnosis be Conducted?	3
C. How Should a Diagnosis be Conducted? How formally should information be gathered?	3
1. Observation	3
2. Surveys	4
3. Review of Records	4
D. What Issues Should be Focused on in a Diagnosis?	5
E. How is the District's Potential for Change Determined?	5
II. Developing Programs for Change in Schools	6
A. What are the Steps in Developing Acceptable Programs for Change?	6
1. Specify Goals	7
2. Clarify Underlying Theory of Change	9
3. Identify Resource Needs for Change	11
4. Locate Sources of Resistance	11
5. Determine Consultant Roles and Skills Needed	13
B. How Can the Force Field Analysis Be Used to Aid Planning?	14
III. Designing and Conducting Training Events	15
A. What are the Goals, Target and Focus of Training?	15
B. How can Training Programs be Linked to Organizational Change?	16
C. Who Designs and Conducts Training Events?	17
IV. Documenting Planned Change Activities	18
A. What Needs to be Recorded?	18
B. Considerations in Developing the Documentation System	18

A PRIMER FOR CHANGE AGENTS

WORKING FOR EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

by Mark Chesler

INTRODUCTION

Advancements in educational equity in public school districts invariably involve the concerted efforts of a group of individuals committed to positive change. These agents responsible for facilitating change are sometimes located within the organization itself. At other times external consultants are contracted to prepare the way for the introduction of new ideas, organizational procedures and individual behavior.

Internal change agents may be either formally assigned responsibility for introducing change or may act informally on their own perceptions of educational needs and social justice. These formal and informal agents of change may be drawn from the ranks of school administrators, teachers, support staff or students and frequently act in concert with parent and community interests.

External change agents, individuals who are neither permanent employees of the district nor members of the affected school community, are also frequently involved in the change process. They may be independent consultants functioning on a free lance basis or staff of an agency that provides consulting services. An example of the latter in the area of race equity issues is civil rights technical assistance centers such as the Program for Education Opportunity (PEO). These agencies serve as external consultants acting in collaboration with local school district officials, who in turn act as internal change agents in the design, implementation, and evaluation of equity interventions.

Whether or not the responsibility for change rests with internal or external agents or, as most often is the case, a combination of the two, some common issues confront the change agent. The following materials and ideas have been assembled in the hope that they will be of use to change agents working

with or within local school districts, including PEO staff and their school district counterparts. We have focused on four issues of common concern to many consultants and practitioners: (1) Conducting organizational diagnoses, (2) Developing programs for change, (3) Designing and conducting training events, and (4) Documenting planned change activities.

No single collection of materials can be expected to speak on every issue concerning change agents or agencies involved in planned change, or to appeal to every actor's values and goals. Nor can we expect that the illustrations enclosed will be relevant to all situations or satisfy the need for a full repertoire of materials. This document, however, should provide a useful review of key processes and approaches that those involved in change may consider employing as they go about their responsibility of enhancing educational equity for all students.

I. CONDUCTING AN ORGANIZATIONAL DIAGNOSIS

A. What is an organizational diagnosis and why is it conducted?

The development of any coherent and sustained program of change requires the consultant and local planners to gather sound information on which to base change designs. Such information can be utilized as a form of "needs assessment" or as a guide to sound tactical planning; in either case it is an early and critical component of change efforts.

This information base can be grounded in two realities: (1) evidence gathered on site which details the empirical state of affairs in a given school or district and; (2) conceptual schemes that permit interpretation of these data and the assignment of priorities, and relationships among variables or factors. The experience and philosophy of the consultant

greatly influences these conceptual schemes, and thus the outcome of any information gathering and diagnostic process needs to be made public and attended to carefully.

B. When should a diagnosis be conducted?

A diagnosis should be conducted as early as possible in the relationship with a local district and continually throughout the change effort. When school district officials raise the issue of collaboration or consultation for change, they are providing base level information on a district's statement of "need" or "problem." Since any given problem may be stated in different ways by different actors, every statement is partisan (or "biased") in nature and must be read as such. Some of this partisanship may be individual in nature and some of it may be organizational (e.g., people in different roles—superintendents, teachers, parents—see issues differently). Therefore, even this initial invitation must be followed up with conversations with other key actors to determine the different statements of problems that may exist and that mirror political differences in the system.

As consultation continues with a district and district officials, more information may be gathered along the way. Even well into a change design new information may be gathered, pressing the consultant to reevaluate his or her prior understanding of the system.

C. How should a diagnosis be conducted? How formally should information be gathered?

It is legitimate for there to be substantial variance in the formal or informal character of the diagnosis, depending upon the material resources and time and energy available for data gathering and the level and quality of prior information. In some instances, conversations with key figures in a district and observation of key events and interactions may be sufficient. In other instances, quite complex problems may require much more formal assessments, with standard information gathering instruments distributed to samples of actors in a school system or applied to standardized records in central offices.

Moreover, in situations where key individuals have markedly different understandings of district problems (or the factors causing those problems), it may be advisable to conduct a formal diagnosis in order to clarify and document—both for the consultant and for system actors—the nature of these differences.

What criteria should be considered in arriving at a decision about the most desirable form of assessment? One criterion for the formalization of diagnosis is the consultant's own comfort with the level or validity of information with which he or she is operating. A second criterion is the complexity of the situation at hand and the consultant's judgments as to whether he or she understands enough about the situation to act. A third criteria is the potential utility of a diagnosis in political terms: might a valid and reliable diagnosis provide a basis for conflicting parties to come together, receive feedback, examine perceptions of their district and begin to negotiate their differences? Information about a system often is itself a tool for change, and as such it must be generated and used in wise ways.

The question of formalization or deliberateness of a diagnostic effort should not be confused with choices of methods of gathering data. In fact, three major approaches to systematic information gathering have been used by educational consultants, school systems and community groups throughout the country: **observation** techniques, **surveys** using either written questionnaires or face-to-face interviews, and the analysis of **records**. Some of these approaches are more suited to obtaining one kind of information than another. However, almost any of them can be used to get information relevant to the concerns district personnel have regarding their schools.

1. **Observation** is probably the simplest and most natural diagnostic effort. All of us, in our daily lives, observe the world around us, either actively or passively. Like all methods of information gathering and analysis, observation requires forethought about what you wish to observe and how you go about observing.

Observation may be natural, but fair and reliable methods of observation do not always come naturally. When planning to observe, one must think carefully about what to observe and the best way of observing it. Sensitivity and accuracy are increased by taking brief notes about what is observed. Relying on memory is not adequate when the information is to be used to create a plan for change or to persuade others what should be done.

The person attempting to observe the school can look at an enormous number of things. For instance, in observing students, one can look for such phenomena as: the number of youngsters that crowd around the water fountain; the number of teachers that yell at them to get out of the halls; the number of students holding hands in the halls; or the extent to which students walk and talk with youngsters of another race.

Sometimes the observer is a participant in the situation or event being studied. For instance, a student or teacher in school may be observing hall activity, lunchroom behavior, or classroom process. While the "participant-observer" has the insider's advantage over the general observer, he or she is more likely to have a personal reaction to the situation. Thus, it may be more difficult to separate "what is seen" from "what is wanted or expected to be seen." At the same time, the fact that people are part of a situation may represent an enormous advantage in terms of their familiarity with and interest in the matter being observed.

2. Surveys—questionnaires or interviews—involve paper and pencil or face-to-face responses by people to a specific set of questions. A questionnaire survey is usually conducted via the mail or in person with a form handed out to participants. An interview form of survey, on the other hand, is a face-to-face exchange in which one person asks questions and one or more other persons answer them. It also may take the form of a true dialogue or conversation among mutually concerned persons.

As with observations, the same problem of deciding "what" and "how" to investigate

arises with surveys. In creating any type of survey, questions have to be written and rewritten, tested with people, and written again. One must be sure that the questions ask what is important in ways that people can understand and answer.

Surveys may be used to assess general public opinion in the community. In this case, they should be administered to a broad and representative sample of all people in the community. Surveys also can be focused on a particular group of people, such as civic leaders, school principals, white youngsters, Hispanic parents, etc. When doing a large survey, it is usually feasible to contact only a small portion of the target population. In order to ensure that the results reflect as accurately as possible the responses one would get if the entire population were contacted, the questionnaires can be filled out by a random sample (10% or 20%) of the total population or sub-population. Such accuracy also can be ensured by representative selection of a sample from the total population available.

3. Review of records represent another method of obtaining information. There are many public and private entities that store useful records: federal agencies, local school districts, state education agencies, teacher associations, local Chambers of Commerce, local planning agencies, banks, and the like. Each community and school is rich with potentially useful information. The problem may only be that of knowing what needed information already exists and where it is located or stored.

In summary, a diagnosis could include the following forms of data collection:

1. informal conversations with key actors
2. observation of key events and interactions
3. interviews with a representative sample of system actors
4. interviews with a random (perhaps stratified) sample of actors
5. questionnaires distributed to a sample of actors (e.g., random or representative)

6. examination of system records (e.g., personnel or student)
7. examination of community records (e.g., census tracts, city council hearings, etc.)

D. What issues should be focused on in a diagnosis?

The issues focused on in the diagnosis should be determined by the realities of the local situation and the consultant's "reading" or interpretation of this situation. Core issues that might be involved in a district's outreach for equity technical assistance include the following:

1. Systemic crisis or disorder
2. Threats of state or judicial intervention
3. Community/parent pressure for change
4. Threats of teacher strikes or collective action
5. Desires of key school or community members to improve local education
6. Sustained student failure or alienation

Any of these stimuli for change may be the "trigger" that initiates a phone call, a letter or visit to a consultant, and a subsequent request for assistance. Each of these stimuli draws attention and, perhaps, diagnostic energy to certain political dynamics and overt issues at stake in the district.

Though one or more of the stimuli listed above may have precipitated the initial contact with the consultant, certain underlying problems or issues may be associated with those stimuli and be crucial foci of the diagnostic effort. Typical underlying factors include:

- lack of race and sex equity in access to educational opportunity, in utilization of educational facilities, and in production of educational outcomes (as evidenced in tenure, dropout, achievement, educational mobility and advancement)

- recent history of efforts at change in the district, including the responses of key individuals to these efforts
- various groups' perceptions of the fairness and efficiency of the school system
- the values of persons in key leadership positions and the skills they need in order to participate fully in a change effort.

The consultant's interpretation of the situation may indicate that one or more of these issues should be examined during the diagnosis.

E. How is the district's potential for change determined?

Two sets of information that are required in a viable diagnostic effort include: (1) information regarding the key issues or concerns people in a system have regarding the educational process itself and (2) information regarding the district's potential for change. Both those sets of information affect the design of a change effort.

Educators and consultants generally are quite sophisticated about assessments of the first set of variables noted above—perceptions about core issues. However, if a diagnosis is to help consultants and district members prepare for change efforts, a diagnosis must venture into the much less charted territory of assessing change potentials in a district. One way to begin such a tactical diagnosis is to assess the postures of key district leaders on important issues. Consider the diagnostic instrument in Figure One on page 6 for assessing the orientation of administrative leadership toward equity.

A second approach to assessing change potential may involve surveying a sample of educators, parents and students with regard to their level of concern about key issues. Once such information is gathered, analysis of these data may help indicate the specific issues on which a movement for change can be built and what portions of the school system or community might support such change.

Of course no change effort can proceed if it is supported by only one or a few persons or

Figure One* Assessing the Orientations of Administrative Leadership Toward Equity						
Instructions: Check as many descriptions as apply to the board and superintendent in your community.						
Orientations						
Leadership	Initiate	Wait for Pressure	Appeal court Orders	Delay Implementation	Resist	Don't Know
Board of Education	()	()	()	()	()	()
Superinten- dent of Schools	()	()	()	()	()	()
Additional Description of the Board's orientation _____						
Additional description of Superintendent's orientation _____						
*Source: Chesler, Bryant, and Crowfoot (1981, p. 35)						

only by one group of persons in a complex school system or community. Generally coalitions must be created among groups representing varying viewpoints in a community. The consultant can aid the process of coalition development by diagnosing where potential coalitions lie and on what issues they may be mobilized. Consider the diagnostic device in Figure Two on page 7 as a way of documenting and displaying the potential for coalition formation around race or sex equity issues.

Thus, a diagnosis of existing conditions in schools can be accompanied by a diagnosis of the tactical potential for change in the local school system. Both kinds of diagnosis serve as a basis for developing local programs for change.

II. DEVELOPING PROGRAMS FOR CHANGE IN SCHOOLS

Once an invitation to provide assistance to a school district has been made, an initial diagnosis of the situation completed and the issues for change identified, we are ready to

develop a preliminary plan for change.* No meaningful change process is likely to ensue unless careful plans are made jointly by authorized district personnel or community members and the consultant.

A. What are the steps in developing acceptable programs for change?

Each school district has its own philosophy, goals, priorities and capacities. Similarly, any consultant or consultant agency has its own expertise and mission and, thus, its own priorities and capacities to work with change programs in schools. Acceptable programs for change must coincide with the parameters shared by these two parties. For example, a district might have priorities in the following areas:

* The consultant also is now ready to make a preliminary decision whether or not to work with the district in question. We say "preliminary decision" because any decision to consult at an early stage of a change process may be altered as all parties find out more about each other's values, goals, risk potentials, skills, etc.

- o assessments of district compliance with policies regarding racial balance, discipline, etc.
- o reviews of district policy to assure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations
- o diagnosis and feedback events that share information with informants throughout the system
- o training programs designed to improve the skills of various staff members assisting with planning processes
- o community information and education programs

Such a school district might seek consultation from a race desegregation assistance center such as PEO in developing effective change programs along these lines.

As programs for change are undertaken, the development of specific plans should be considered with respect to at least five overarching concerns.

1. Specify Goals

First, what goals or targets are the object of the change process? If goals are not specified, no party has any way of assuring satis-

Figure Two* Diagnostic Device for Documenting and Displaying Potential for Coalition Formation on Issues				
Instructions:	Think about the school and community. Can you identify which issues have the best potential for different types of coalitions on race/sex equity issues?			
	Under each coalition column place your rating of the likelihood that the designated groups might coalesce concerning each of the issues displayed on the left side of the chart. If there is high likelihood enter an "H", an "M" if there is a moderate likelihood, and an "L" if there is a low likelihood that the groups would come together to work on the issue identified.			
Issues	Likelihood of Cross-Race Coalitions	Likelihood of Cross-Class Coalitions	Likelihood of Professional- Community Coalitions	Likelihood of Cross-Sex Coalitions
1. Increasing safety	()	()	()	()
2. Upgrading educational quality	()	()	()	()
3. Removing tracking	()	()	()	()
4. Monitoring administration's performance	()	()	()	()
5. Relocating district financial resource	()	()	()	()
6. Achieving sex equality	()	()	()	()
7. Grievance procedure for students and parents	()	()	()	()
8. Achieving racial equality and justice	()	()	()	()
9. Other (specify)	()	()	()	()
*Source: Chesler, et al. (1981, p. 37)				

faction with the results or even assessing outcomes. Moreover, unless goals and targets can be specified clearly, no change design is likely to deliberately alter group behaviors so as to bring about changes. Change targets may exist at the level of the community, the organization, or the individual.

Some change targets are best identified at the **community level**. For instance, many aspects of the local community support the current structure of race and sex discrimination and inequality in the schools. If discrimination and inequality are selected as the targets of a change effort, then key aspects of the school community will need to be altered to support more effective programs. Among the targets of such community change programs could be:

- (1) ways in which various racial and cultural groups relate to each other in the school community
- (2) the kinds and amount of community resources available to local schools
- (3) segregated boundaries of the community and its schools
- (4) distribution of power and control in the school community
- (5) characteristics of community representatives who deal with the school on a regular basis
- (6) degree of sex and race stratification in employment and employment opportunity
- (7) ways in which school leaders reach out to and work with each element of the community.

If race and sex equity is treated as a school issue alone and not as part of a wide range of community problems, then school changes probably will not be adopted and maintained peacefully over time. It is too easy for communities to ignore their own patterns of racial and sexual separation and stratification and to concentrate on the schools. But there can be little progress on school change unless connections are made to aspects of the local community that subtly support race and sex discrimination and inequality in schools, municipal finance, jobs, housing, social services, transportation, human rights, and all the other factors which determine the quality of life in local communities.

Other change targets can be identified at an **organizational or school level**. Although there are many differences between individual schools, there are also many similarities between them. In any school certain common structural characteristics and operating procedures stand out as key targets for organizational change. The targets of such organizational or school level change might include:

- (1) bureaucratic structures and processes
- (2) the ability of various staff and consumer groups to influence school decisions
- (3) educational values and norms biased in the direction of white and male and affluent groups
- (4) curriculum and curriculum tracks (formal or informal)
- (5) instructional techniques in classrooms
- (6) bases upon which staff members are rewarded
- (7) cocurricular activities
- (8) linkages with the external environment.

A central element in both community and organizational change is change in the **individuals** who live and work in these systems. Efforts to work on such issues as race and sex equity will require changes in individuals in order for them to plan and implement community or organizational level efforts. Individuals undergoing changes may include people from all role groups in the school or community (central administrators, principals, teachers, counselors and other staff members, parents, students, other members of the community or community agencies, and so on). They may include persons from all racial, sexual and cultural groups. Among the targets of individual change are:

- (1) new information and ideas about oneself, the society, the school, sex and race relations in general, and ways of making changes.
- (2) new values and attitudes about people of other races and sexes
- (3) new ways of teaching and managing classrooms and school buildings
- (4) new feelings about oneself, about other people, and about conflictual situations

- (5) new skills and behaviors in teaching, in working with others, in providing leadership, in managing a school, and in making changes.

2. Clarify Underlying Theory of Change

A second major concern in the development of change programs is: What is the underlying theory of change that guides plan development? Is it consensus-based or conflict-based? (Chesler, Crowfoot, and Bryant, 1978). Advocates of consensus theories of change proceed according to different assumptions and, therefore, make different tactical choices than do advocates of conflict theories of change. Designers of change programs must be clear about their assumptions so that their tactics are tuned to fit these ideological or empirical assumptions, lest they design a series of tactics that do not fit their values or that run counter to each other.

If a change strategy primarily involves elements of a **consensus** strategy, the change agent may establish or contribute to problem-solving committees set up by school officials. Such cooperative groups will bring together people who don't know each other and who have different experiences with schools. Some group members probably will be teachers, administrators, and students, while others will be parents and other community members.

Three common consensus tactics that can be used to alter race and sex equity issues are **informing, appealing and persuading**. The use of public meetings, as well as media and poster campaigns, are examples of information efforts. Appeals are illustrated by petitions and formal complaints to educational and community authorities. Lobbying and legal tactics represent efforts to persuade or exert influence on school leaders to accept programs preferred by parent and community groups.

If a change strategy primarily involves elements of a **conflict** strategy then the change agents must do a particularly careful job of planning. For instance, it is not sensible to take risky action, escalate a conflict, and precipitate an underlying crisis, unless one is clear on the probable outcomes of such action, as well as the steps to take along the way.

One tactic consistent with a conflict strategy is a legal challenge or **court suit**. A formal legal suit, charging unconstitutional segregation of students or unfair plans to educate these students, has been the catapult for improved race and sex equity efforts in many cities across the nation. **Non-violent demonstrations** are another set of actions conflict strategists might consider. Boycotts of school, picket lines, sit-ins, and other demonstrations of concern and pressure all involve large numbers of people acting directly to confront and challenge school or community officials. These forms of non-violent protest raise the consciousness of many people in the community and express the refusal to go along with school as usual. However, these actions also may lead to charges of illegal trespass or violence. Violence is especially dangerous to parent and student groups and should be avoided at all costs. It can create lasting damage, provides an excuse for officials to use coercive or police power and may shift public sympathy and moral support from one side to the other side.

Consensus and collaboration tactics assume that people can work together once they identify common concerns and that they can create trust in one another. According to this approach, parents are interested and willing to follow the lead of professional educators, and educators are committed to the goals of quality and equality in education. It assumes professional educators and citizens or community groups can and will work together effectively and that one will not take advantage of the other. Moreover, it assumes different racial and sexual groups can and will work together effectively. Other assumptions are that the legacy of racial ignorance, fear, or hatred built up over several generations can and will be lessened or eradicated by desegregation. It is assumed that through contacts with one another in the school and community different racial and social class groups **can overcome** the distance and isolation that has been their heritage.

The conflict strategy, on the other hand, assumes that various organizations or community groups have differing concerns because of the race, sex, economic class, or age of their members. Although some concerns are

shared across these groupings, many concerns are not held in common and there are conflicting opinions about what ought to be done. With regard to equity issues in school, the conflict strategy suggests that parents may not trust educational authorities to make wise teaching-learning decisions; poor people may not trust affluent people to make equitable community policies for everyone; women may not trust men to be fair to them; and racial/ethnic minorities may not trust the white majority to make wise decisions about cultural pluralism. Based on these assumptions, the basic process utilized to make change involves confrontation, pressure and negotiations or bargaining that protects group members and their concerns. Minority groups, women, poor people, and other groups with low power gather their resources and **organize to influence** other groups who control schools and communities.

Both consensus and conflict strategies have been successful in helping people to act on equity issues and in bringing about change. How can you decide which to use? There is no easy answer. Often it depends on how much cooperation has occurred in the past between the various interest groups in the school and local community. Where school and community groups have not been able to cooperate, the conflict strategy might be more appropriate. If school personnel and parents have good working relations, consensus strategies undoubtedly will work. But care must be taken to discern whether consensus and collaboration approaches are being used to play one interest group off against another or to give the pretense of meaningful change. One way of assessing the relative utility of consensus tactics and conflict tactics is presented in Figure Three below.

Figure Three*
Questions for Assessing the Relative Utility
of Consensus and Conflict Strategies

Instructions: For each question below circle the response to the right that best matches your opinion.

	CONSENSUS	CONFLICT
1. Are concerns common between the groups involved?	Yes	Not at first
2. Do people of different groups agree with each other about what ought to be done?	Yes	No
3. Will high power groups take advantage of racial minorities and women?	No	Yes
4. How easily will educators accept changes that community groups want to make?	Easily	Not easily
5. If people disagree with what the concerns are or what should be done about them, what change tactics will work best?	Communication, Persuasion	Confrontation, Pressure
6. What is the level of trust between ourselves and targets of change?	High	Low
7. What key skills are required?	Openness, Honesty	Gaining influence

*Source: Crowfoot, Bryant, and Chesler (1982, p. 83)

Responses to the questions in Figure 3 will help decide whether or not the consensus or conflict approach should be used. Then the change agents are ready to determine the resources needed for change.

3. Identify resource needs for change

A third major planning question is: what resources are needed by district personnel to bring about the specified change and what resources are needed by various people or offices throughout the system involved in the change effort? The set of resources that might be helpful in any change effort include both organizational and personal resources. Organizational resources for change might include:

- Legitimate authority (position)
- Money available for use
- Inside information on policy/program
- Inside information on people in leadership positions
- Good contacts with people
- Technical means of doing the organization's job
- Office space
- Reproduction services
- Capacity to disseminate information
- Secretarial help
- Control of others
- Consultant resources

Personal resources might include:

- Knowledge of the issues
- A clear social identity
- Ability to deal with people
- Ability to recognize racism easily
- Ability to recognize sexism easily
- Clarity about one's own values
- Energy
- Financial safety
- Support from family/friends
- Support from co-workers
- Ability to run a public meeting
- Ability to confront others
- Ability to organize others
- Ability to speak in public
- Ability to lead a discussion
- Connections to powerful people
- Willingness to risk loss of status/prestige
- Ability to write clear memos
- Internal emotional balance

A particularly important resource, one that represents both personal and organizational richness, is the involvement of large numbers of people who care about the issues at stake in a school change program. In Figure Four on page 12 we present a format for identifying people in a school district or community who might be of help in generating change.

Assessment of the availability of these organizational and personal resources is a critical step in the planning process, because it helps to ground abstract planning in the reality of the local situation. If the resources required to carry out a change effort are not available, the change effort must be redesigned to be consistent with the level and type of available resources. Or, time and energy must be allocated to create or make available the new resources required by the change design.

4. Locate sources of resistance

Just as it is important to assess the level and location of resources for change efforts, it is important to locate the sources of resistance against change efforts. The following exercise is designed to promote thinking about the reasons for resistance to race and sex equity efforts in schools and communities. The exercise is also designed to identify the change targets--personal and organizational factors that encourage resistance to change.

Exercise:

Studies of compliance with the "letter and spirit of the law" indicate that school officials often resist court-ordered changes in educational programs and policies related to race and sex equity issues. This resistance may take many forms: failure to implement new policies; failure to create new programs; institution of policies without follow-through; sabotage of innovative programs; delay of compliance efforts; appeal of court orders; diversion or harassment of program officers/leaders; mobilization of community resistance; etc.

Figure Four
Identifying School-Community People to Help Generate Change

	Kinds of school-community people to consider:	Names of people to consider:
	1. Friends and neighbors:	
	2. Participants in school activities (e.g., parent-teacher organizations, classroom volunteers, etc.):	
	3. Volunteers active in youth activities (e.g., Scouts, "Y", sports, etc.):	
	4. People working with youth in community organizations, religious organizations, fraternal groups, etc.:	
	5. Persons suggested by teachers and administrators:	
	6. Persons suggested by leaders in parent-teacher organizations:	
	7. People suggested by the leadership of this organization or interested parties:	

The roots of this resistance to race and sex equity court orders also are multifold, but some useful explanations include:

1. Disagreement with the values underlying an order.
2. Confusion over the meaning and import of an order.
3. Lack of a political power base to make change (either a base in the public at large, the professional system, or community elites).
4. Lack of personal courage to risk a fight.
5. Lack of a clear structure to utilize for change.
6. Lack of skill in knowing how to innovate.
7. Lack of knowledge of program options.
8. Lack of knowledge of the true dimensions of the problem and issues.

Robert Terry (Crowfoot and Chesler, 1981) has categorized these roots of resistance into problems of **mission** (1,2), **power** (3,4), **structure** (2,5,6) and **resources** (4,5,6,7,8).

Consider your work with a particular school system: which of these roots of resistance do you see?

Can you expand on these examples with more detail?

Are there other roots of resistance?

If you can specify these sources of resistance, and can explain to yourself and others how and why they occur, you are ready to plan ways of reducing or overcoming them.

5. Determine Consultant Roles and Skills Needed

A fifth major concern when developing specific change plans is the level and type of consultant skills required in the change effort. Districts often need to design change programs that are beyond their own resources and the resources of the consultant assisting them in coordinating the planning process. If accurate assessments of this factor are made during the planning stage, it will be possible either to alter the change effort or to recruit additional external human resources. Decisions made about the change goals and targets, the underlying strategy, the resource needs, and the sources of resistance to the proposed change will help the district determine all the consultant skills needed, the roles each consultant

will be asked to fulfill, and the point in time their services will be needed. Any working agreement between the district and consultant should be specified in a way that details mutual expectations, including the process, goals and time lines.

Just as the district should assess the consultant skills and roles needed, each consultant, in turn, should assess the skills he or she can best use in the district and his or her ability or interest in performing the roles indicated by the planning information. The chart in Figure Five below is one example of a self-assessment device intended to help consultants identify and assess their ability to perform key consultant roles in the school change process.

Figure Five*				
REFLECTIONS ON ALTERNATIVE CONSULTANT ROLES				
Instructions:	A. For each alternative role indicate your responses to all appropriate columns to the right.			
	Do I do this? (Yes/No)	How much do I value this? (Highly, Moderately, Little)	Do I have these skills? (Yes/No)	Who do I see doing this in this agency/community? (Name)
Alternative Roles:				
1. Advocate	()	()	()	_____
2. Information specialist	()	()	()	_____
3. Trainer/educator	()	()	()	_____
4. Joint problem-solver	()	()	()	_____
5. Identifier of alternatives	()	()	()	_____
6. Linker to resources	()	()	()	_____
7. Fact finder	()	()	()	_____
8. Process counselor	()	()	()	_____
9. Objective observer/reflector	()	()	()	_____
10. Other (specify)	()	()	()	_____
B. Select the two roles you do that the district values the most and list the core skills required for these two roles:				
1.	_____			
2.	_____			

*Source: Lippitt and Lippitt (1978)				

B. How can the Force Field Analysis be Used to Aid Planning?

One particularly useful planning aid involves using diagnostic insights or information about the local school system, community, and involved individuals to analyze the forces at work in a given situation. This technique—the Force Field Analysis—differentiates factors pushing for stability from factors pushing for change in local situations and provides a diagram of potential forces of support and resistance to change.

At any single point in time an organization or community is assumed to be relatively stable, with the forces for and against change in balance. This array of forces for and against change is called the "force field." People concerned about making change must upset the balance in the force field by overweighting the system in the direction of change or reducing the weight of barriers against change.

An instrument for depicting a force field appears in Figure Six below. In a force field the goal for change is usually listed at the top. Spaces for the forces pushing for change are provided in the left-hand column. Spaces for the forces pushing against change are provided in the right-hand column. The various categories of forces are listed on the far left. Some of the forces may be in the society or community, in a group or organization (e.g., schools), or within individuals.

For instance, in a local plan to improve racial relations, the legacy of American racism would be considered a **societal or community** force pushing against change. The way schools are structured, such that teachers, students and the community have little to say about any local plan, would be an example of an **organizational** force against change. A community movement pressing for desegregation would be an example of a **community or societal** force for change. Small groups of teachers or students organized in either direction are further examples of **organizational** forces. The personalities of local administrators, the superintendent, or the human relations officer would be examples of **individual** forces that may be arrayed on either side of the midline.

In constructing force fields it is important to be specific in order to identify factors in detail. This requires refinement of the preliminary analysis. For instance, to say that one of the positive forces for improving racial relations is "Community Group Support" is too general. Subsequent identification of specific supporting groups and public attitudes which contributed to community support is necessary. To take a different example, listing "racism" as an organizational barrier to desegregation does not provide information adequate for planning. Is this racism held by individuals, as in teacher or principal attitudes? If so, is it based mostly on fear, on ignorance of minorities, or on incompetence in dealing with interracial classrooms? Or is the

Figure Six*		
THE FORMAT FOR A FORCE FIELD DIAGRAM		
Instructions: List the change goal and forces pushing for and against the change goal.		
Change Goal:		
	Forces pushing for change +	Forces pushing against change -
<u>Categories of Forces:</u>		
Societal/ Community		
Organizational/ Group		
Individual		
Other		
*Source: Chesler, et al. (1981, p. 25)		

racism a property of the entire school organization, as in professional norms that favor white and affluent youngsters or leadership roles that exclude minority staff members? Of course, racism may be a product of many things—individual, organizational, and community forces may all be at work. But no change program can expect to deal with this situation unless there is an analysis of where the racism is found and what maintains it.

Once the relevant and potent forces have been identified and listed, a plan for change may be created that attempts to alter the current force field and create a new situation. Force fields may be altered in three ways: (1) through the elimination or reduction of a negative force or a barrier to change; (2) through the increase in potency of a positive force for change; or (3) through the addition of new positive forces. For instance, in the attempt to alter discriminatory practices in a local district, one may have identified an overtly discriminatory assistant superintendent as a negative force against change. The elimination or reduction of the potency of this individual may be accomplished by altering a certain negative behavior, by transferring critical responsibilities to another person, or by removing the person from the position and role. A local principal who is a positive force in this context may be increased in potency by being given added responsibility, by being commended publicly for his equity conscious behavior, or by being promoted. New personnel or new community forces that may have a positive impact on school policy also may be added to the equation.

III. DESIGNING AND CONDUCTING TRAINING EVENTS

One of the most common approaches selected by change agents to promote educational equity in local school districts is inservice training programs. Sometimes this approach is utilized overmuch, as a quick and easy "fix" to every problem. However, inservice training programs are only likely to be effective when the diagnosis of the district situation indicates that altering the knowledge, skills, or attitudes of one or more key role groups is needed and that support for training and change is available.

Before designing and conducting training programs, several considerations must be foremost. One consideration involves clarifying the relationship between any particular training event or series and long-term plans and programs for change. In some cases, the focus upon retraining individuals may draw energy and attention away from efforts toward more sustained organizational structural changes. In other cases, training programs can be an important element in facilitating a long-term program of organizational change. While in either situation well-planned and well-run training events can have substantial personal benefits for the individuals involved, the ideal program should help focus attention and energy on the overall change goal.

A second and related issue involves ascertaining the goals, targets and focus of the training program. A needs assessment should be conducted prior to the design and implementation of the training program to determine whether or not training is actually needed and the form the needed training should take. In both cases, the needs assessment must be directly linked to the broader organizational diagnosis. The needs assessment may center on two foci: 1) individuals' needs and desires for retraining, as they experience and can state them; and 2) organizational needs for members to alter their behavior and/or attitudes via a training program, as organizational leaders or change agents perceive them. The results of the needs assessment should be used to determine the goals, target, focus, and other aspects of the training program.

A. What are the Goals, Target, and Focus of Training?

The **goals** of training programs may be focused on individuals or on organizations. The former focus generally emphasizes changes in individual attitudes and skills. The latter focus emphasizes changes in organizational norms and roles: e.g., to the extent that a person's official roles in an organization are restructured or organizational norms modified, organizational change has occurred.

The **targets** of training programs in school districts may include all categories of persons

working or living in the system. For instance, some training programs have as their target school boards, central office staff, or local school principals. The training goal for those groups may be the upgrading of managerial talents and competencies. A frequent target of training efforts is teaching staff. A less frequent target is counseling, custodial, secretarial, transportation, or other support or ancillary staff. The training goal for these groups may be new staff attitudes, competencies, or behaviors that are seen as a necessary condition for more effective schooling. Students, parents or other community members also may be part of training programs, especially programs that emphasize their new roles in more decentralized or consumer-oriented educational systems.

As a group of people who are working together engage in retraining efforts together, their collective changes in attitudes or behavior may aggregate into new organizational styles. To the extent that long-lasting organizational change requires new behaviors, attitudes, and skills on the part of all organizational members, the training of all members of an organization or representatives from all of its segments may be essential for the success of the organizational change effort. Moreover, when only one element in a multiparty organization receives special training, there may be unequal access to the benefits of the change program. Multiparty participation in training programs helps to ensure wide participation in subsequent change efforts.

In addition to deciding upon the goals and targets of the training program, decisions also have to be made about the appropriate **focus of the change work**. For example, a training program for community parents might focus on imparting one or more of the following:

- 1) **new information and ideas**, e.g., about society, the community and the school; about one's own self-interest in the long run; about race and sex and class relations; about the process of desegregation and education; about the possible directions and strategies of change.
- 2) **new values and attitudes**, e.g., about people of other races, sexes or social

classes; about new educational designs; about one's own role in making changes.

- 3) **new feelings**, e.g., about oneself; about one's relations to friends, families and peers; about fear, anger and risk.
- 4) **new skills and behaviors**, e.g., in parenting, managing and learning; in making changes in organizations and communities; in working with other people, especially people of other races, sexes and social classes; in performing new roles, or old roles in new ways; in coping with conflict.

Similar foci can be generated for training programs for students, teachers, educational managers, etc.

B. **How Can Training Programs be Linked to Organizational Change?**

Several options exist for enhancing the linkage between training events and longer term designs for organizational change. Some of these options occur in design choices internal to an event, while others are primarily manipulations of the timing of events. For instance, attempts to "design in" an organizational focus might involve:

1. recruiting trainees from the same work group or staff subgroup
2. ensuring that parties to organizational conflict attend the same training session and deal with relevant issues
3. providing trainees with diagnostic data about their own organization
4. conducting training exercises in which participants problem solve issues in their own workplace and plan workplace changes.

In addition, mini-training events may be held in the workplace prior to and after an official training session. Provisions may also be made for post-training monitoring of individual or organizational changes. This strategy "grounds" the training event in concrete local situations and can lead to follow-up learnings with on-the-job or on-the-spot discussion, sharing and planning.

Despite all efforts to develop training events which promote organizational change, the linkage between individual and organizational change truly is a two-way street. In addition to designing training events in ways that link to and lead to organizational change, organizations must be prepared to support and reward those changes individuals make as a result of training events.

Individuals do not exist alone, apart from the relationships, groups, organizations and communities of which they are a part. Even if the individual training efforts were successful in altering individual feelings, values, and skills, such alterations would be difficult to translate into new behaviors unless the surrounding contexts support such new behaviors.

It is unreasonable to expect people to alter themselves unless there are incentives and rewards for these changes. Rewards may come in the form of personal satisfaction from doing a good job better: as indicated by students responding positively to a teacher's new instructional styles or new managerial techniques. Rewards may come in the form of social support, for instance, from friends, family, and colleagues announcing their approval of the newly learned behaviors. Rewards can also come in the form of organizational payoffs—more planning time, a merit increase in pay, or public recognition for excellence.

Unless organizational and interpersonal supports for changes in behavior are forthcoming, it will be difficult for people to sustain changes they have begun. Thus, a key issue in any training program is the degree to which such supports can be built into the ongoing priorities of the school system. New practices, pronouncements by top leadership, support groups, and rewards and incentives all must be focussed on these desired changes. Otherwise, individuals ready to change their attitudes or behaviors will re-enter an organizational setting that is not prepared for their new norms or new operating styles and will revert to prior behavior, behavior typically rewarded by prior organizational norms and practices.

C. Who Designs and Conducts Training Events?

As with other change programs, change agents should avoid "lone ranger" behavior characterized by their single-handedly designing and conducting district training events. Moreover, change agents should avoid "imperialistic" behavior characterized by their designing and conducting a training event for a population target without informing or involving them in the assessment of needs, development of training goals, design of activities, etc.

On the contrary, district representatives requesting assistance with training events and representatives of the groups targeted for training, should be involved in meaningful ways in designing or legitimizing the training program. Their involvement in assessing training needs and establishing training goals is a critical step in linking the training events to the overall organizational goal. Their involvement at various points in the design, implementation, and other aspects of the training program is also important to the program's success because of the many facilitative roles they can play: e.g., providing insights, preparing potential participants, or dissipating resistance to training.

In those cases where district representatives act collaboratively with external agents (such as PEO) to design training events, but do not involve school and community persons who are the targets of training in such design work, the external consultant may suggest such involvement or generate it personally. This action avoids replicating within the change program the authority structure of the local district, a structure which traditionally excludes some staff groups and consumers from full participation in change. Instead, the involvement of representatives of the target group in designing the training program models a new style of representation and involvement for all district members.

Relationships established between internal and external change agents and others working on a change program may create a change cadre with a broad range of skills, a

cadre that can share event leadership and thus provide a wide variety of resources for change. No one change agent has the total range of skills required to design and conduct training events for all sets of goals and targets, for all linkage mechanisms, for all school systems and other constituencies, etc. In order to create a change cadre that can work together on long term change goals, participating agencies and organizations must develop mechanisms that monitor and reward such collaboration and make time and energy available for such peer discussion and planning.

IV. DOCUMENTING PLANNED CHANGE ACTIVITIES

Developing and utilizing a recording system that systematizes and accounts for change is an important part of the change effort. Documentation is crucial for the school district undertaking equity interventions because it facilitates compliance reporting, evaluation of organizational progress, and assessment of certain types of intervention models. Documentation is critical to an external change agency because it allows organizational staff members to build off prior contacts with local districts and analyze the kinds of contacts, requests and actual programs its organization undertakes.

A. What Needs To Be Recorded?

Because of their potential importance in formulating and documenting the change intervention, at least two sets of staff experiences need to be recorded: 1) school district and agency contacts related to the change intervention; and 2) needs of district and agency staff for more information and new change agent skills. All contacts related to the change intervention, both initial and follow-up, should be documented by the district and external agency (consultant), regardless of who initiates the contact or the nature of the contact (e.g., phone call, letter, or face-to-face meeting). Relevant information to be recorded includes inquiries and requests for change agent services, diagnostic studies, details of the change program (i.e., goals, resource needs, etc.), and summaries and evaluations of planning events and training sessions. A district or agency file on the change

effort might include correspondence, technical assistance plans, training designs, and monitoring reports. These files may facilitate an annual review of collaborative equity interventions and provide ready sources of information useful in the preparation of year end and other special reports.

District and agency staff needs for new information or skills indicated by problems encountered in the implementation of change should also be systematically recorded. The development of a constantly evolving staff "need to know" should make it possible for district and agency leaders to design programs that can better support the work of their respective staffs.

B. Considerations in Developing the Documentation System

There are three issues that should be considered when developing a record keeping system to document the change program:

- 1) Staff of the change unit should be involved in determining how relevant information should be recorded (e.g., format).
- 2) Agency policies should be established to govern access to the records and
- 3) A time table and process should be set up to regularly review the records, use them to evaluate progress toward achieving the originally identified goal, and formulate plans for future change activities.

Obviously, one critical criterion for any effective recording process is that it be acceptable and workable in the eyes of district and change agency staff who will use it. Otherwise, it will be ignored or sabotaged. Therefore, a first step in creating a feasible recording system is for senior staff members to share the need for such a system with the remainder of their staff and ask for their input on suggested formats.

Any recording or documentation system must be announced and formally established. Since some use may be made of that information for reporting purposes, internal analysis, or staff planning, it must be specified early

who will have access to it. If staff members in the external agency are to make use of a historic record of contact in any particular school system, they have to have access to such documentation. However, because of the sensitive nature of equity interventions in which such agencies are involved, organizational policy must ensure that district files will only be distributed to staff and retained consultants with direct responsibility for work with the district. But, school district records are usually subject to freedom of information laws granting wider public access. So to avoid any misinterpretations careful consideration should be given to the nature, type, and format in which information is recorded and stored.

The timing and frequency of district and agency reviews of records also should be established. Intervention documentation should be reviewed at least once a year, particularly prior to making plans for the next school year. Evaluations of progress toward achievement of change goals can then be used to develop more effective plans for the coming school year. Records of staff specification of their needs for more information or new change agent skills should be reviewed more often in order to monitor staff problems and provide responsive staff development and training sessions as the need arises.

SUMMARY

This document reviewed four key processes and approaches that persons involved in change programs might employ as they try to enhance educational equity for students in a public school district—conducting an organizational analysis, developing change programs, designing and conducting training events, and documenting change activities. Each component is important to the systematic change process. Each requires the collaborative efforts of internal change agents who are school district staff members and external change agents or agencies.

We hope this brief review of change processes and techniques is of use to both internal and external change agents who are working for educational equity in our nation's school districts. Sharing our experiences and insights

as change agents can help encourage each of us and improve our effectiveness in promoting educational equity.

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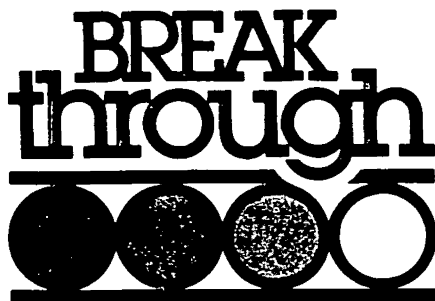
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