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Development of Regionalism in Education

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The United States has moved rapidly into an era in which planning and policy decisions in the public sector are made on a regional basis. In field after field—transportation, environmental protection, economic planning, health and welfare services, and education—the broader region is replacing the smaller political or socio-economic unit as a base for planning and development. While largeness offers no guarantee of either efficiency or quality in services, and some public operations are best carried out in small units, it is nonetheless true that much planning and development has to be done on a regional basis if it is to make any sense at all.

In education, regionalism appears to be necessary if we are to provide special and expensive services, achieve reasonable equality of educational opportunity, work toward greater equity in financing, and strive for more efficiency in operations. More specifically, some personnel matters, such as recruitment of staff, salary schedules, and collective negotiations, can probably be handled better on a regional than on a local basis. Programs for the handicapped and for vocational education need to draw students from a wide area and are usually too expensive for local communities. Increasingly, we are coming to see the need for an education system large enough to have an adequate tax base and to deal effectively with state and federal government agencies.

Our mobility as a people and our technology lead us to regionalism in education as well as in other public service sectors. Improved roads and bus transportation were primary factors in the centralization of school districts; they make feasible an even larger regional education system. Newer communications technology can, if properly used, link classrooms and schools over a broad area. A rising level of education and expectations, including a growing interest in life-long learning opportunities, argues for regional education units that can meet demands for more sophisticated services. It is increasingly evident that we must plan for public educational services which coordinate regional resources, serve regional needs on an equitable basis, and make possible the quality and economy of effort available in larger-scale operations.

To argue for regional planning and development in education is not, however, to deny the advantages of local community effort or control. Bigness is not necessarily a desirable phenomenon in public services. Many aspects of public school management, such as operating an elementary school, need to be governed and supervised locally by the persons most concerned. In some respects, small-scale education units may be much more effective than large ones; reporting to parents is an example. Moreover, we have abundant evidence to show public resistance to mandated movement of pupils over large regions in the interests of social justice.

Thus educational development on a regional scale must be undertaken with an intention to do what can best be

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done regionally: to plan, to coordinate resources, to offer specialized programs, to make alternatives available, to effect economies of operation, to provide a sufficiently broad tax base, and similar functions. Other educational decisions and activities should be assigned to smaller units such as individual school districts or community colleges.

In this publication we will describe the background and current status of educational regionalism as exemplified by three types of education region: the multicounty educational unit, the intermediate school district, and urban-suburban cooperation. The criteria used in planning for regional education will be discussed. We will draw on our own substantial experience and research as well as other sources of information.

Educational Regionalism: Background

Public education has traditionally been the domain of the states and localities. For a long time—at least a hundred years—efforts have been made to merge or confederate small school districts and, more recently, to create larger county or regional education units, in the interests of providing better and more equitable learning opportunities for all citizens. Many of these moves were instigated by state governments interested in efficient management and economies and disposed to larger education organizations under professional leadership. While such efforts were often strongly resisted by communities reluctant to give up their control over local education, especially the elementary schools, there were numerous examples of citizen action to consolidate both economically and educationally inefficient school districts.

Centralization or consolidation of the more rural and sparsely populated regions of the country came first. In some parts of the nation this move was unnecessary because the county was already the organizing unit for rural and small-town schools. But where the common school districts prevailed, especially in the Northeast, the tempo of change toward larger units quickened as state governments used efficiency models and state-aid incentives to persuade local districts to unite. Until recently, city schools were relatively unaffected by mergers except that the nature of school governments on their borders was changed.

In the 1960s, a number of states instituted or revised systems of intermediate districts designed to provide special services to local school districts within their boundaries. An intermediate school district is usually defined as a part of a regional system, placed between the local school district and the state education department, to serve both the local school needs and interests and those of the state government. During this period, cities became actively involved in regional educational alliances for the

first time, as they either became part of, or involved with, such developments.

The national movement toward larger public school units has resulted, as indicated, from the impetus of state government leadership coupled with new theories of professional management. But such larger units would not have come about without the contributing technology of highways and the now ubiquitous school bus. Also, the citizenry, almost always wary of surrendering local control to larger units of government, would not have permitted mergers and consolidations had not their own level of educational expectations been rising and had not state aid formulas made centralization seem profitable as well as educationally advisable.

Regional cooperation in education was further accelerated by the war on poverty and the massive education programs undertaken by the federal government in the 1960s. Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provided funds for research and innovation on a regional basis. Many other projects of this period encouraged regional responses to problems and provided the machinery for confederating school districts. In higher education, the community colleges were seen as intimately tied in to their regions, and four-year colleges and universities formed consortia to achieve goals impossible for single institutions. Though both the drive for social reforms and the amount of funding for educational innovations have receded, many of the regional patterns of this period have either persisted or been retained in other forms.

The movement from small to larger units in public education is best illustrated by the example of New York State.

The Cole-Rice Act of 1925 culminated a long struggle in which state government and a number of reform groups sought to modernize rural and small-town schools so that they could prepare children for participation in an industrial society. The consolidation of small school districts into larger central districts and provision of expert professional management and supervision were the goals of this reform movement. Some rural interests and many citizens of rural and small-town New York resisted these moves, but State Education Department officials and their allies, especially the noted Joint Committee on Rural Schools, either countered or ignored opponents' arguments. A compromise measure, The Cole-Rice Act, made centralization feasible and opened the way for the consolidation of small schools into larger units. By 1952, more than 400 central school districts, comprising 6760 former districts and serving over 85 percent of rural New York, had been formed. In 1971, only 757 school districts remained of the 5112 that had existed in 1945-46.

Ironic as it may appear today, the model often used for rural school reform was that of the urban school system, then generally regarded as becoming educationally efficient and professionally led. And, more basically, central

districts came into being because an industrial society and a modernized agriculture were ready for them. The old country school, for all its closeness to the people and recognized assets, was deemed unfit. Only a larger region with greater resources, more children, and a diversity of talents could maintain efficient schools. Each centralization that came into being was voted for by at least a majority of that new district's eligible voters who went to the polls.

Joining in the move toward larger educational regions, many of the city school districts of the state were expanded by adding those adjacent small school districts that had not joined earlier centralizations.

Centralization in New York State was accompanied by a steady reduction in the number of school district super-intendencies, with the result that each of the remaining superintendents had a larger region to supervise. The state created these offices in 1912 to insure professional direction of rural schools. However, with the growth of large central school systems, they gradually became less significant, and the state therefore encouraged the consolidation of the district superintendencies. Thus, in another area of school operation, the trend in New York was toward larger management units.

Supported by the Council on Rural Education and the Conference Board of Farm Organizations, intermediate school district legislation was enacted in New York in the 1940s. This legislation was intended to empower the commissioner of education to take the lead in forming regional education organizations, largely on a county basis, that would confederate the central school districts and serve as mediating agencies between the local school districts and state government. This move toward still larger regional systems of education was primarily the result of action by rural and small town interests who wanted their areas to catch up educationally with the cities and metropolitan suburbs. Almost wholeheartedly accepting the need to change, rural people seemed also to have accepted a sort of supporting role in an industrialized society. In a sense they were asking for more of what metropolitan schools were thought to have already—the size and tax base that would enable them to afford college preparatory, vocational, and special education for their children.

Implementation of the intermediate school district legislation was viewed by both laymen and professionals as a difficult and long-range process. Written into the law, therefore, was the clause, "In the interim, the Commissioner may authorize the establishment of boards of cooperative educational services."

These boards, referred to generally as BOCES, have become the nucleus for further regional education planning and development in New York. Each BOCES is governed by a board of education generally representative of the boards of participating school districts. Administration of a BOCES is in charge of a district superintendent

whose former responsibilities for individual school district management have largely given way to direction of BOCES affairs.

Member school districts agree to share in administrative and, more recently, building costs of the BOCES. Each member district annually purchases the BOCES services it wishes to have, such as instruction, instructional materials, or staff development. All but the largest cities may affiliate with BOCES and, gradually, most of them have done so. Over the years, the state government has financially aided local school districts in direct relation to their tax rates for the shared BOCES services they use. This favorable state aid policy has provided a strong impetus for development of the intermediate district movement.

Most BOCES offer programs in vocational and special education and provide multimedia instructional services. Increasingly they have become responsible for regional inservice staff development and adult education. Originally responsible for administrative and some instructional data-processing services, individual BOCES have now turned over these functions to centers representing larger regional systems that include several BOCES each. The plan is to have the BOCES add other functions, including research and development services formerly conducted at either local or state levels.

Currently, New York State is moving toward development of a small number of education regions, with New York City being one and the others being formed around the nucleus of a BOCES. There will probably be about 40 BOCES servicing smaller regions but clustered together in a few larger regions. Certain regional services and many of the planning and development functions will be organized and provided by the broader regions; other services will take place in the smaller, individual BOCES regions, and most of the public education operations will continue to be carried on in school districts. Ideally, the latter will be large enough in both population and wealth to serve as efficient base units for the two regional systems.

New York's evolving education regions are designed to improve communications between local communities and state government, to provide for a number of strong educational resource centers to assist instruction and staff development, and to better coordinate the educational resources of each region. One of the current issues in this movement is how to maintain a high level of citizen involvement throughout the units, from the individual school, to the district, the region, and the state level. This is likely to be the most difficult problem to solve.

A Multicounty Education Region

Increasingly, planning and long-range development in education are conceived for regional units which may encompass two or more counties or a city and adjoining areas that cut across county lines. Where such a region

makes sense for planning and development purposes—in terms of geography, economics, demography and, most important, educational resources and needs—educational futures need to be planned for with the entire region considered as a unit. Such a multicounty region is not a practical unit for the operation of schools, colleges, and many other educational services; it is normally too large to operate most day-to-day educational programs efficiently. But only through a very careful matching of regional education resources and needs can it be determined which services and programs might be broadly regional and which are better suited to operation by the smaller units. The following goals were set in a study of a 12-county region of New York State conducted by the authors in 1968-69 (1). These are illustrative of the kinds of steps necessary in considering educational development on a multicounty basis.

- To determine what educational services and facilities are available to the population of the 12-county region. This involves a survey of formally prescribed educational institutions, such as public school districts, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (intermediate school districts in New York State), independent and Catholic schools, colleges, and universities. Included will be a general view of curricular and instructional opportunities afforded people of the region by these institutions. Also to be surveyed as to scope and character are the nonschool educative agencies, such as the mass media, museums and libraries, preschool instruction, and apprentice training programs. Both school and nonschool institutions are to be viewed with reference to their capacity to meet regional needs and degree of innovative behavior.

- To estimate, in a general way, the educational needs of the region by observing the activities of young people leaving secondary schools, obtaining the views of a variety of individuals, and studying available data sources.

- To gain a sense of the balance between educational requirements and educational opportunities in the region, and to discover shortages in opportunities or duplications of effort.

- Assuming lacks in educational opportunities or shortages or misallocations of educational resources, to make specific recommendations for more detailed studies and possible courses of action.

The procedures used in meeting these goals of the 12-county regional study illustrate the thoroughness required in regional planning. Comprehensive interviews were conducted with 40 key individuals in the region, including chief school officers, administrators of BOCES and Catholic school systems, college presidents and planning officers, New York State Education Department staff members, and selected individuals knowledgeable about formal and informal educational opportunities in the region.

Extensive use was made of State Education Department records, data, and publications. Other information was

obtained from the planning officers of college-level institutions, regional planning directors, libraries, census data, and school district records. A list of printed sources of information was requested from officers of a wide variety of public and private agencies.

Because the region was so extensive (comprising 12 counties), the investigators carried out intensive studies of 3 subregions: Broome County and portions of Tioga County, Tompkins, and Cortland Counties, and portions of Chemung and Steuben Counties. These subregions were deemed to be fast-growth areas, reasonably self-contained, and complex enough to deserve intensive examination.

Among the types of data found useful in making an assessment of the region's educational resources and needs, were the following:

- Population (by county) showing past growth, present status, and projected growth or change
- Economic characteristics, employment, and income (by county), employment projections
- Educational characteristics of the population (by county)
- Public school enrollments, enrollment changes, and projected enrollments (by county and school district)
- Enrollments in each of the regional Boards of Cooperative Educational Services
- Total educational expenditures and revenues (by county)
- Per pupil expenditure and real property valuation (by county and school district)
- State aid to public schools (by county and school district)
- Professional and nonprofessional staff employed by each higher-education institution
- Enrollment projections of each education institution
- Long-range planning efforts of each higher-education institution
- Characteristics of nonpublic schools and postsecondary-education institutions (by institution)

The following general problems and recommendations grew out of this study of a 12-county region. These illustrate the type of data we can expect to get from regional educational assessment:

- While the region was relatively rich in resources for education, they were not properly assessed in regional terms, and comparatively little was being done to coordinate them. With the exception of a college consortium, a museum with outreach, and the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services, most formal and nonformal educative agencies seem to be operating alone. There was need for a regional coordinating agency or for an existing institution to assume coordinating responsibility.

- There was a substantial dearth of data to show to what extent educational resources matched needs in the region. Even in studying the balance between graduates and regional employment, the data were insufficient. Both the tools for gathering such data and the means of employing them needed to be further developed.

- Educational planning in the 12-county region seemed to be quite separate from other types of regional planning; this is one reason why data were hard to obtain.

There was need, here and in other areas, for improved coordination between educational and general planning. Perhaps this may best be accomplished by having state planning agencies better coordinated; though there are steps at the regional level, such as closer cooperation among educational and other agencies, which would improve the situation.

- Much needed to be done to involve the people of the region more fully and effectively in coordinating educational resources and in matching them more suitably with needs in the region. Though schools, colleges, and other agencies supported loose affiliations on a regional basis, both institutions and individuals tended to think and plan in narrow, local frames of reference. If a truly responsible regional agency for educational development could be maintained and if this agency shared its functions openly and widely with citizens, it should be possible to begin to work more effectively to meet the region's educational needs.

In utilizing multicounty educational resources in a coordinated way, the procedures and recommendations illustrated by this study provide some guidelines. The following points need to be made as further guidelines for multicounty educational development:

- Certain educational programs, among them, coordinated library services, educational data processing, mobile museum and musical productions, coordinated admissions procedures, and limited exchange of students, are quite likely to be successful over a wide-spread multicounty region. Other programs or services, such as shared vocational education centers, pooled pupil transportation, and cooperative continuing education offerings, may well be most effective if used in smaller regional compacts comprising two counties or portions of several counties. Other functions, which include elementary schooling, close social agency-public school ventures, and college-community interaction, are clearly best designed for limited single-county or community use. It is a mistake to conceive of a given region as the appropriate unit for all educational transactions: a broad region may be an ideal planning area; more limited regions may be best for certain types of educational development; and still more-limited locales may serve best for program operations.

- Decisions as to the kind of organization appropriate for multicounty educational coordination can be made intelligently only on the basis of data that are usually lacking, incomplete, or unorganized in most regions at the present time. Despite years of data collecting and substantial experience in regional planning, any region undertaking educational planning will find it necessary to first gather the requisite data; some of this will have to be generated.

- An important decision in multicounty education planning and development will be designating an agency to serve as the center for the activity. Such an agency

should be on the scene and have sufficient regional status to enable it to work efficiently. It should be able to relate well to state and other regional agencies, to institutions and citizen groups in the region. Ideally, such an agency would have some of the resources necessary to collect and interpret data, help organize the region for shared programs and services, and provide support services for regional activities. It should have the capacity to lead in coordinating regional resources and matching these with regional needs.

No single, multicounty, regional agency is equipped to meet this challenge at present. In some regions, a community college or university may agree to do so and gradually develop the capacities necessary to the assignment. A group of school districts or an intermediate school district (such as BOCES) might serve as the agency. In some cases the public and private educational organizations together may decide to create a regional education agency directly responsible to the constituent organizations.

Intermediate School Districts

In most parts of the United States, the intermediate school district is the form taken by the expanding regional education systems. The intermediate district is sometimes coterminous with a county, but it also can comprise portions of several counties, or all or part of a metropolitan area. Such an enlarged district serves the needs of a number of autonomous school districts, is governed by a board with members from these districts, and is financed by both the operating school districts and the state. Intermediate districts represent a link between state and local governments in education; sometimes they assume responsibilities ordinarily performed by state government and almost always they perform functions normally carried out by the member districts. Intermediate districts often provide services in vocational and special education, multimedia instructional aids, data processing, and professional and nonprofessional staff development. Examples of states with developing intermediate school districts are New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan (especially Oakland County), Texas, Washington, and California (with San Diego County an example).

Using New York State as the locale and eight intermediate school districts (BOCES) as cases, we undertook a study of the intermediate district as the prevailing type of education region (2). Among the general questions guiding the study were these: is the intermediate district, as it is now operated in a number of states, the most effective regional arrangement for public education? Is it necessary to minimize local school district autonomy for the larger intermediate system to be both efficient and effective? Is population the best basis on which to define the boundaries of an intermediate school district? Should weight be

given to highway systems, natural communities, natural market areas, and geography in determining intermediate school district boundaries? Does the intermediate school district, as currently designed and operated, fit the needs of rapidly expanding metropolitan areas? Does the presently organized intermediate district offer a more reasonable alternative for achieving equality of educational opportunity than do the independent school districts?

Eight intermediate school districts were selected on the criteria of population and real property tax base per pupil to provide the study with both large and small districts that were also "rich" and "poor". Data were gathered by means of interviews, questionnaires, observations, and written sources. Answers were sought for the following specific questions, which might well serve as a guide to those assessing an intermediate district's characteristics:

What are the chief features of population distribution in the district? What are the patterns of travelling to work, to social activities, and to shop?

What are the chief economic characteristics of the district?

What are the patterns of change in employment opportunities, especially for young people? Does the region contain a natural market area, and does this area conform to the educational region? How do the arterial highway system and other modes of transportation affect the district economically and in other ways?

What are the chief educational (school and nonschool) resources of the district? What degree of coordination of, or interrelations between, these resources is apparent?

What seem to be the goals of the intermediate school district? How are goals modified or replaced over time? To what degree do goals of the district match with educational needs of the region? To what degree is there overlap between goals of the several educative agencies of the region?

To what degree is educational planning in the district a coordinated part of general regional planning? Specifically, are the goals of schools and the intermediate school district coordinated with those of other government and educative agencies and with business and industry?

To what degree are educative agencies in the district showing innovative performance as evidenced by participation in major national movements in educational innovation as these apply to the district? What conditions and what sorts of leadership tend to facilitate innovative performance, to inhibit it? In what ways and how effectively, are other institutions of the region, including libraries, museums, industries, and historical and scientific organizations, involved with the schools in innovative activities?

What economic and political resources do educative agencies of the district use to carry out functions? How do the schools and the intermediate district react to a lack of sufficient economic, political, or human resources? How do they react to an oversupply of such resources?

What procedures, formal and informal, do the school districts and the intermediate school district use to assess their effect on their environment? How realistic do these assessments appear to be in terms of regional characteristics and needs? In what ways do the school districts and the intermediate school units modify functions in accordance with findings from formal assessments?

Three districts of the eight studied will be described to show selected characteristics of intermediate units in New York State.

Erie BOCES 1, located in the western part of New York State, was classified as a large, economically poor district. Most of the district is urban, and the small portion classified as rural is predominately nonfarm. The area encompasses the city of Buffalo, several medium-sized cities, and assorted towns and villages.

Educational services to the component school districts of Erie BOCES 1 included occupational education offered in regional facilities; special education for children with sight and hearing difficulties, the mentally retarded, and those with learning difficulties. They also provided the districts with an array of data-processing services such as census data, attendance reporting, payroll, bus maintenance control, or instructional use of computers. In addition, the curriculum development services offered to the region included teacher-training programs in several specialties, video-tape library materials, and programs in the performing arts. Shared staff specialists available to schools included psychologists, speech therapists, attendance supervisors, and home teachers.

Decisions concerning goal-setting for the intermediate district programs appeared to be made jointly by administrators of the component districts and the BOCES. Since BOCES services were elected by the cooperating districts, dissatisfaction with the choice of goals or with goal achievement could be expressed by withholding financial support and student enrollment from a given service.

A block to optimum regional development in the area was the lack of communication between county and regional planning agencies, on the one hand, and the school districts and BOCES, on the other. Coordination in planning is essential to prevent overlap of regional efforts; an example is the preparation of the demographic projections needed by various regional agencies, as well as the school districts and BOCES. Strong emphasis on local prerogatives and decision-making and an absence of articulation between educational and professional planners can weaken the long-range planning for an area.

The Rockland County Board of Cooperative Services is coterminous with Rockland County. A rapidly growing area located less than 33 miles from New York City, Rockland was classified for this study as medium size and "rich". When asked if Rockland County was a suitable region for educational development, respondents said "yes", on the basis of population characteristics, financial support base, compact geographic area, and availability of human talent to develop a regional education system. It was suggested that independence of the individual school districts in planning education programs and in recruiting area business and industry to provide a greater tax base might be obstacles to regional development. The school districts in the intermediate district were therefore simultaneously trying to work cooperatively in occupational and special education, while proceeding separately in developing a financial support base and in establishing locally based education programs.

Lewis County intermediate district offered a sharp contrast to both Erie and Rockland BOCES. It had not only a small population but also a limited resource base, which classified it for this study as a small, "poor" district. The BOCES offered shared services—art, music, and physical education teachers, a psychologist, and a speech therapist — as well as occupational education, data processing, special education, and instructional services. Innovation in occupational education was inhibited by the small population, lack of supervisory and specialist staff, and the limited financial basis that supported public education in the region. The sparse industrial and business base in the county-region required job placement throughout the northern part of the state, if students were to find jobs for which they received occupational training. The lack of local job opportunity set limits on developing the new and innovative programs that would have benefitted the immediate region's employment situation.

This portion of our research, focusing on intermediate educational regions, indicated that this kind of unit was as feasible now as it was when established 30 years ago. This discussion makes plain, however, that each type of intermediate district has problems which need to be addressed. In an earlier period, social cohesiveness was considered the necessary condition for establishing an intermediate unit. Conditions determining suitability are more varied now, and therefore no single factor is a sufficient condition for development of an education region.

Urban-Suburban Education Regions

Educational regions that link urban and suburban school units may use various forms of organization, but they seem to share a common impetus for organizing. That compelling reason is the problem of adequate financial support for urban and suburban school systems. With declining tax revenues, outdated school plants, and a host of related urban problems, cities face escalating costs for educating their disadvantaged populations. Suburban units are also confronted with rising school costs, as well as relatively fixed tax bases and shifting populations that shrink or bulge in a seemingly random fashion.

Inequalities of educational opportunity are often cited within the urban-suburban region. The inequality charge has led to court tests and decisions on legislation. For example, recent federal and state court decisions have not yet established that the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution includes equal distribution of municipal services. Since level of spending for education services in a governing unit is related to the wealth of school districts, the unequal urban and suburban tax bases in a region have yielded unequal spending for education services. The urban area is particularly pressed financially as it attempts to provide municipal services (housing, transportation, water and

sewer, fire and police protection, education, etc.) through a shrinking or static tax base.

Regional systems of education, which provide a broader support base than either the urban or suburban units can provide individually, must be considered if urban-suburban areas are to be able to resolve the educational service problems now confronting them and if they are to achieve educational goals of quality and equal opportunity.

We have been engaged in a study of the components and characteristics of urban-suburban regional education systems (3). The unit for analysis in this research was a "metropolitan region"—a SMSA (Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area), which is defined and used by the United States Census Bureau. For a region to be designated a SMSA it must include: 1) One central city with 50,000 or more population or two adjacent cities with a combined population of at least 50,000. The smaller city must have a minimum of 15,000 inhabitants. 2) Counties contiguous to the county or counties containing the core city (cities) are included in the SMSA if at least 75 percent of the gainfully employed persons of the adjacent county are engaged in nonagricultural occupations. 3) The area must have either 15 percent or more of the contiguous counties' employed residents working in the central county or receive 25 percent or more of its work force from the central county. 4) Other detailed criteria such as those relating to population density, whether the political subdivisions are in an unbroken chain radiating from the central city, and employment and housing characteristics are considered.

Educational governance in the SMSAs is carried out through the school district unit by the school board. Several variations of the pattern can be noted. Cunningham classified the variations into four types: core-city-suburban-fringe-county pattern, multiple core-city-suburban-fringe-county pattern, core-city-county pattern, and metropolitan-government pattern (4).

The core-city-suburban-fringe-county type can be illustrated by the educational governance pattern characterizing Chicago, Illinois, or Syracuse, New York. In each example of this type there is a core city surrounded by suburban districts, with a county unit superimposed on the SMSA. Each educational governance unit exists quite independently of the others. In addition, the non-public-school units and post-high-school and higher-education units within the SMSA operate as units that are separate and independent from the city, the suburbs, or the county units.

Cunningham's second type—multiple core-city-suburban-fringe-county pattern—is different from the previously described type because it includes more than one core city. Examples are the Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, Pennsylvania, SMSA group or the Albany-Schenectady-Troy, New York, SMSA group. Not only are the cities contiguous and therefore possess interrelated economic, social, and political characteristics, but

they are also interrelated to the surrounding and interlocking suburbs by these same characteristics. Although suburban areas are willing, in many cases, to work with cities in extension of general services such as transportation, recreation, and water and other utilities, they appear reluctant to cooperate in education. The service of education is perceived as a local service to be governed by the local school unit on a competitive basis with other city, county, and suburban units.

The core-city-county and the metropolitan-government pattern are units of educational governance found less frequently than the two previously described. The core-city-county type is characterized by a SMSA with a city, usually a city with the financial and population problems of the 1970s, and a county, usually with a growing population and tax base. In this example, as in prior types, there is independence of operation between and among the educational units at all levels. Educational governance units in southern states, characterized by county units for educational services and city units with "typical" city problems may yield additional examples of this type of educational regionalism in the 1970s.

The metropolitan-government pattern is the single example of metropolitan educational regionalism in which education is just one of several services provided by the governing unit. That is, not only does the metropolitan unit supply fire, police, water, transportation, and other services to the SMSA, but it also procures and allocates resources for basic educational services at the K-12 public school level. Post-secondary and higher-education services are not necessarily provided, although it appears that this could be done if selected service units were organized and coordinated through the metropolitan-government pattern. Within the SMSA, the core city, suburbs, and county are all part of the encompassing governmental structure, with a single school-governing unit for the region that is organized by and operated with the metropolitan government.

Identification of SMSAs in northeastern United States and Canada and review of education services within these units showed three viable examples of urban-suburban education regions meriting study to identify key organizational elements. The education regions were: Nashville-Davidson County, Tennessee, as an example of a city-county unit; the greater Hartford, Connecticut area, which illustrated a network of voluntary cooperation in an education region; and Toronto, Canada, as a confederation of several educational governments in a large metropolitan area.

We conducted detailed interviews with elected and appointed local government officials, community leaders (e.g., newspaper editors, church leaders, businessmen, or union officials), school board members, school district administrative staff, city and regional planners, state education department personnel, and higher education administrative staff. Data were also collected from federal

and state statistical reports and documents provided by local government and education units.

The study of urban-suburban education regions or metropolitan regions sought to identify demographic, socioeconomic, and political factors contributing to and shaping metropolitanism in each of the three case study regions. In each region, education was studied as one of the services provided to the population. Although education service received first attention, its relation to other metro services always was considered. Structure, processes, and relationships of the urban-suburban education region were identified in each of the three case studies.

City-county education region

Education is one of the services provided by the General Services District of the Nashville-Davidson County Metropolitan Government. The metropolitan government unit was approved by the voters of the city of Nashville and county of Davidson in June 1962. Before then the city and county had separate systems of governance, reflecting the urban and suburban nature of the two areas.

Governance of the city-county school system is through a school board appointed by the mayor, an education committee of the elected metropolitan council, and a relatively standard form of school district administrative staff organization. The regional education system, therefore, has key organization links between the school district administrative staff, school board, education committee of council, metro council, and the mayor.

Interviews revealed a widespread belief that metropolitanism in education had significantly contributed to equalizing educational opportunity within Nashville-Davidson County. The positive response came from businessmen, political leaders, school system administrators, and leaders of teachers' professional associations.

School desegregation was one issue that provided a focus for equalizing educational opportunity. Plans had to be incorporated into the existing economic bases of the total urban-suburban area. As the school system and the metropolitan government worked together, they found that equality of educational opportunity generated major economic issues for the area. Problems of transportation, professional staffing, and pupil assignment were paramount issues, but the key to the process was that these problems and issues were being considered and resolved in a larger organizational unit with a greater capacity to adapt and respond than either the city or county would have had individually.

Economic benefits of the urban-suburban school organization were cited by those interviewed. For example, the single school district eliminated the variation in tax rates between the city and county. Equalization problems and multiple assessment issues were no longer stressed. In addition, the single system brought about equal expendi-

ture per pupil, equally applied personnel salary schedules, as well as a single source for obtaining and coordinating federal funding for the system. Sources pointed to economies achieved through centralized purchasing of equipment and supplies; centralized accounting and business procedures, including data processing; and reduction of overlapping services.

Numerous examples of coordination and cooperation were identified in the Nashville-Davidson County metropolitan school system. Public television was operated as a nonprofit corporation made up of educators and laymen; career education was linked to community businessmen and agencies; community education schools were designed to serve the needs of the respective areas; adult education programs were organized to teach basic skills to a wide variety of clients, such as participant referrals from the welfare department and men in the rehabilitation center at the state prison.

The single form of government, through a merger of city and county, presents one alternative for providing educational services in an urban-suburban area composed of a major central city surrounded by a cluster of suburban units. In this pattern, education is not a separate service provided for by a separate administrative unit, rather it is an integral part of the range of services provided to the region. One strength of this pattern is that educational services can compete with other regional services that are arguing for support.

Voluntary cooperation in an education region

The Hartford, Connecticut, SMSA is made up of 27 towns covering a relatively small area by SMSA standards. However, it is densely populated and has a wide-range socioeconomic index. Towns are the governing units within the SMSA, with a host of special units for fire, sewer, lighting, schools, transit, and other services. Boundaries of each of these service units differ.

School district governance is also organized through the town unit, and each of the cities and towns has its own school district coterminous with the city or town boundaries. Elected local boards of education govern the districts. The school boards must secure approval from the city or town governments for budgets and appropriations.

The region has had a national reputation for planning and development and for regional coordination through voluntary cooperation. Much of this reputation stems from efforts of public agencies and private business organizations such as the home offices of national insurance companies, the Hartford Chamber of Commerce, Greater Hartford Corporation, and the American City Study's recommendation to create the Greater Hartford Process, Inc. and its development instrument, the Greater Hartford Community Development Process. These units, with their binding purposes and membership, are important because they represent voluntary action by citizens to

improve the region economically and socially. Regional development in the Hartford urban-suburban area is therefore characterized by voluntary metropolitan organizations that are recognized by the state or national governments, and by private agencies supported primarily by the large corporations of the area.

A stratified sample of 7 school districts in the greater Hartford region was drawn to describe pupil enrollment and urban-suburban characteristics. The examples of voluntary cooperation within and among these districts that are cited here illustrate types of voluntary cooperation and are in no way inclusive.

Project Concern was described as a program for racial and class integration in which mainly black, inner-city children were bussed to predominately white, middle-class schools, both public and private, in the suburbs and in urban areas. Project Concern stemmed from initial efforts of the Hartford Board of Education and City Common Council and the Greater Hartford Chamber of Commerce. The result was a step toward integration in schools, thus linking the cities and towns of the region.

Community groups and the schools developed numerous cooperative programs to engage business and industry with the schools. For example, an insurance company "adopted" several elementary schools, then paired pupils and employees, brought students into the company offices, and organized staff development activities for teachers in these schools.

School districts of the region have also engaged in activities involving two or more districts. Most of them were supported by state and/or federal funds such as Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. One activity was the sharing of library facilities, materials, and information retrieval systems.

Formal regional education organization in this region would require overall planning and an agency to implement the plans. Voluntary cooperation is as extensive and effective as the quality and quantity of school and lay leadership in the region and as the financial resource base of the area. In a voluntary action area, there is often unnecessary competition for scarce resources and an absence of communication among the large number of agencies. The separate governance units create barriers to regional education planning. However, as another alternative to totally separate procurement and allocation of resources in a region, voluntary cooperation may be the only effective social and political means to regional coordination in some areas.

Urban-suburban federation of education regions

Metropolitan Toronto, Canada, is organized as a single, federated government including the City of Toronto and 6 surrounding municipalities. The uniqueness of Toronto as a metropolitan region—its economic prosperity, absence of racial conflict, high education level, population

growth—put it in sharp contrast to other northeast metro-politan regions. The organization of metropolitan Toronto and its procedures for providing education services to the area can offer, however, another alternative form of urban-suburban educational development.

A list of special-purpose agencies serving the metropolitan Toronto region includes commissions for transportation, planning, police, licensing, library, hospital, conservation, harbour, performing arts, national exhibition and a general coordinating committee. Some services within the metropolitan area are the sole responsibility of its own government (such as police), others are shared by it and local governments (such as water and sewage), and others are the responsibility of the local governments (such as zoning).

Education is a shared responsibility between the metropolitan and local governments. Since 1967, the Metropolitan Toronto School Board has been a federation of 6 component school boards, each of which represents a large population (approximately 100,000 to 700,000) and is capable of offering a wide range of educational services.

The power of the metropolitan school board is economic, since it controls the procurement and allocation of most funds for the schools of the component districts. Control is exercised by this board because it determines the operating budget for education and decides about capital spending. In addition, the metropolitan board determines staff salary schedules and carries out collective bargaining processes with all education employees; it determines teacher-pupil ratios and maintains uniform accounting procedures within the education region. The board operates schools for the mentally retarded and deaf, establishes attendance zones and school boundaries, and maintains veto power over new school sites and building specifications.

The six local school district boards have basic responsibility for operating the public schools of their respective districts. The boards determine the curriculum and select the staff. Component districts provide vocational and/or technical education programs with funds allocated by the metropolitan board. Adult and continuing education are organized at the local level. Local districts provide their own administrative services of data processing, centralized purchasing, coordination of transportation, and inservice education. (These services were commonly provided on a regional basis in the other educational regions we studied.) Those interviewed in the Toronto region believed these local services are important responsibilities for the six component districts, since they regard them as a means to maintain the strength of the local education units.

The two-tiered system of educational governance in metropolitan Toronto has functioned for more than 20 years. It presents educators and laymen with a long-term perspective on regional education for an urban-suburban area. Toronto points to the need for clear delineation of

responsibilities in service delivery, adequate representation of the region's districts in the system of educational governance, and strong local education districts as necessary elements in a viable regional district.

Planning Criteria

We propose the following 12 planning criteria for those interested in or responsible for development of regional education systems:

1. In planning for such a system, a number of factors need to be considered. They include the size, density, and distribution of population; movement of people to work, market, and recreation; layout of major transportation arteries; nature of the economy and financial ability to support public services; and projections of future economic and demographic trends. Geographic size and terrain are factors of only secondary importance. A regional education system may be coterminous with one or two counties, but this is not a necessary condition. Much more important to determining location and size are a combination of social and economic factors.

2. Where a city is the economic core of a region, it ought to be a fully participating unit in the intermediate or regional education system. A number of educational services (vocational education is a good example) make sense only if they mesh with the entire region. In the past, larger cities have been either legally unable or unwilling to join regional education systems; ways need to be found to facilitate their full partnership. It would be blindness to current realities, however, to minimize the problems of linking cities with suburbs. We believe that the confederation pattern used in New York's BOCES makes it feasible for cities to join in the effort to provide fully regional educational services.

3. Sparsely settled and nonurban regions can develop viable regional systems of education if they tailor programs and services to local needs and to regional capacities. In such settings the intermediate unit may be used to supplement small school district offerings in reading, science, and the arts, with somewhat less attention given to the highly specialized vocational subjects. We found that the most successful regional arrangements in sparsely settled regions were those that took advantage of the unique needs and resources of these areas instead of emulating the styles of the urban regions.

4. An effective regional program of educational services can improve opportunities for all segments of the population and need not weaken local participation in, and influence over, schools. Most intermediate education systems are governed and financed by participating local school districts. If such districts have strong traditions of citizen participation in decision-making, it is likely that such participation will affect local district decisions about the broader regional system. Where a regional education

system has absorbed the former local school districts (as expanded city school districts have, for example) it is important that ways be found to involve the public as fully as possible in the major decisions of the larger system. We recognize the difficulties involved in public decision-making in large units of government; we urge however that ways be found to surmount these difficulties.

5. Each education region needs to develop an articulated system of education (preschool through community college) that also has informal yet effective relations with such educative agencies as four-year colleges, social service agencies, and manpower-training programs. To achieve such a system it will be necessary for the boards of governance and the professional leaders to work together in a council or commission of some sort, however informal. It is especially important that the governing boards and administrators of the intermediate school district, the community college, and the several school systems of the region be able to plan and develop together on a continuing basis. Such a council or commission would not have responsibility for the day-to-day operations of schools, colleges, and other agencies, nor would it necessarily determine planning goals, development policies, or evaluate measures for the subsystems. But for matters of a truly regional sort—coordination of services, provisions for new services, and the like—the regional council would act for all participants.

We suspect that any such regional agency would start with a good deal of paper work and relatively little power, put over time, in areas of educational concern to the entire region, the council might establish itself as the agency for decision-making and be recognized as such. Presumably, the legal power to adopt council recommendations would remain with such subunits of the system as schools and colleges. This sort of relationship of legal operating agencies with a planning and development body can be found now in the ways intermediate school districts and community colleges work with advisory committees.

6. Intermediate or regional education agencies need to work closely with other agencies in the planning and development spheres, an arrangement that has not existed in the recent past. Regional decisions affecting land use, transportation, economic planning, and health care are sufficiently interrelated with educational planning to call for close interagency coordination. Educational planning is particularly dependent on the data assembled by the general regional planning agencies. And, as the states build more fully formed planning regions, it is to be hoped that all types of planning, including educational, will be conducted regionally in a coherent way. We do not argue for exactly coterminous regions for all planning and development activities; this would be unnecessarily restrictive, considering the different needs of a variety of public sector services. But the planning and development functions should be coordinated much more systematically.

7. Because regional school systems will, in the foreseeable future, be confederations of reasonably autonomous school districts, it is important that the individual school districts be of sufficient size and sophistication to take full advantage of regional services. Because larger school districts often have both greater resources and more diversified administrative staffs, they can frequently demand and utilize a number of specialized services that are less available to the smaller and poorer districts. In the same way, larger school districts are better equipped to avail themselves of the services of community colleges and other educative agencies. Emerging regional systems of education will serve the public better if inefficient school districts are merged into larger units. Such mergers can be effected only with the leadership and encouragement of state agencies.

8. Coordination of all educational resources and services in a region to the greatest extent possible should be a planning goal. We have suggested modes of analysis for this in the section on multicounty educational regions. While private schools and other similar educative agencies may not be legally joined to public school systems, there are a number of fruitful alliances of an informal type that can pay off in terms of increased efficiencies and better opportunities for segments of the public. Just as strong local school districts in a confederation result in a strong intermediate system, so tying these public units to private and nonschool public educative organizations can strengthen the total regional service effect in education. Day-to-day operations may profitably remain in the hands of individual units, while such activities as planning, data processing, curriculum development and inservice education, to mention but a few, call for region-wide coordination of resources.

9. To establish and maintain effective regional education systems, it is essential that the role of the state government be vigorous and supporting. Historically, state governments have led in educational planning and development and have, through incentive financial aid, persuaded local school districts to consolidate or affiliate with intermediate districts. If regionalization is to work fully, the state role must be taken more effectively than it has been in the past. It is essential that state agencies coordinate their planning and development activities well enough to allow this coordination to pay off in regional systems development. At the state level, general planning, public education, higher education, manpower training, social welfare services, health services, to mention only some areas, are likely to be organized independently. This sometimes translates regionally into a jumble of unrelated or poorly related state services operating each to its own. We strongly recommend coordinated planning and development in regions and, particularly, a state policy that makes such coordination advantageous.

10. Vocational education, often the heart of an intermediate or regional educational system, needs to be a

region wide service. Individual school districts neither can nor should afford to go it alone in this specialized and fast-changing field. Vocational programs can be innovative, tied effectively into the regional economy, related harmoniously with general education programs, and of service to a broad spectrum of the regional population. We have encountered programs of this quality. However, many regional vocational programs ought to break away from traditional categories of training, so they can coordinate secondary school and community college offerings more efficiently, better relate vocational with college preparatory curricula, and design programs suited to the special needs of women, minorities, and older persons.

11. Regional or intermediate educational systems can offer an array of services—special programs in the arts and sciences, personnel training and development, special education for handicapped children, applications of educational technology, nursery school opportunities, tax collecting, to cite but some of these. Currently operating intermediate units range in variety of services from a minimum core of three or four to a dozen or more. It is our view that an educational service should be performed by the unit that can do so most effectively and efficiently. Many standard services, such as reading, college preparation curricula, and athletics, are better performed by local school units, whereas others, like those mentioned previously, seem to be best assigned to more central and region wide agencies.

12. Educational services have been largely financed by local property taxes supplemented by state appropriations. We have observed that most intermediate school districts have not advanced much beyond this point; local schools raise money from property taxes and receive state aid, they contribute to the support of intermediate school programs and operations, and the state supports the intermediate units directly to some extent. We assume that the property tax will continue to provide most of the financial support for some time to come, and that state aid to school districts will supplement this local tax. At the very least, we believe that regional fiscal planning ought to be the basis for school financing, with both property tax planning and state aid formulas determined on a regional rather than a local base. It seems perfectly reasonable to look forward to a region wide taxing system that supports public education on the total local tax base of the broader region. This approach ought to insure a more effective planning process, a somewhat more equitable basis for school support, and no serious threat to local school districts that will retain autonomy in their operations.

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