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## A Report of an Internship in the St. Joseph Public Schools, St. Joseph, Michigan

Thomas J. Miller  
*Western Michigan University*

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A REPORT OF AN INTERNSHIP IN THE  
ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS,  
ST. JOSEPH, MICHIGAN

by

Thomas J. Miller

A Project Report  
Submitted to the  
Faculty of The Graduate College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the  
Degree of Specialist in Education  
Department of Educational Leadership

Western Michigan University  
Kalamazoo, Michigan  
December 1983

A REPORT OF AN INTERNSHIP IN THE  
ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS,  
ST. JOSEPH, MICHIGAN

Thomas J. Miller, Ed.S.

Western Michigan University, 1983

This report describes an internship completed in the St. Joseph Public Schools. The internship was devoted to working with the superintendent as he implemented a plan to close schools, reassign students, and find a use for the closed buildings. This report details the planning, process, and leadership styles used to carry out this task.

Chapter I contains a background of the St. Joseph Public Schools.

Chapter II describes the history of past attempts to close schools in the St. Joseph District and an overview of the plan that the superintendent used in the 1982-83 school year.

Chapters III, IV, and V describe in detail each of the three separate phases of the plan. These were: (1) closing two buildings plus Jefferson, (2) student reassignment, and (3) building use.

Chapter VI is a summary and evaluation of the intern experience.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My thanks go to Dr. Richardson of the St. Joseph Public Schools for providing the opportunity for an invaluable learning experience during my internship. The hours that Dr. Richardson spent sharing in confidence his plans for closing schools will be a lasting help in a leadership position. Dr. Carol Sheffer has also given encouragement and counsel when needed.

A special thanks to my employer for the financial support and employment opportunities that they have given.

Thomas J. Miller

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JOSEPH, MICHIGAN

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## CHAPTER I

### BACKGROUND OF ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

#### History

As part of the Educational Specialist degree program at Western Michigan University, students must complete a 240-hour internship program. The internship must be supervised by an experienced person who has expertise in a leadership position.

This writer was given permission to serve an internship in a school district in southwestern Michigan. The internship was supervised by a superintendent, who received a doctorate degree at Western Michigan University. He had been in education for 25 years and had filled a number of positions including elementary teacher, principal, and superintendent.

Formal schooling in St. Joseph began sometime before 1832. The first high school program was housed in a building purchased on November 5, 1914. The first high school building was built in 1916 with an addition being added in 1937. This building served as a high school until 1959 and as a junior high school from 1959 to 1976 when it was torn down. A new high school was constructed in 1959 and a new junior high school in 1969. Between 1971 and 1956, five elementary schools were constructed (Aldrich, 1981). Enrollment grew from the 1830s to its peak in 1964-65. The school district had experienced a declining enrollment since then with a projection of

2,589 students for the 1983-84 school year. In 1981, one elementary school was closed and in 1983 two more elementary schools had to be closed because of declining enrollment.

The present school district, as established in 1957, encompassed approximately 20 square miles in southwestern Michigan along the shoreline of Lake Michigan. It served a population of approximately 30,000 people.

The city was an upper middle-class community. The population served was made up of mainly white collar workers. Its main industries included Leco, Clark Equipment, and Heath Company and was influenced a great deal by Whirlpool, which had its main administrative offices in the area.

The school district had a tax base levying 37.111 mills. The school district did not receive state aid. It was out of the state aid formula because of its high property evaluation.

The community and parents were strong supporters of high quality education. Achievement test scores were well above the state averages. In comparing the high school test scores to those around the state, it ranked in the top three or four high schools in the state. The teachers were the highest paid in that part of the state.

The intern's assignment was to work with the superintendent as he implemented plans to close schools. During the 1982-83 school year, it was necessary to close three elementary schools. The problem of closing three schools was divided into three phases:

(1) which schools to close, (2) student reassignment, and (c) use of the closed buildings.



The role of the intern was to be at all public and school employee meetings as a recorder and observer. The intern met regularly with the superintendent to understand what was to be accomplished at the meetings as well as to offer impressions of comments and interactions at these meetings.

Approval of the internship was granted by the Educational Leadership Department of Western Michigan University.

#### MAJOR INTERNSHIP--PROSPECTUS

INTERN: THOMAS J. MILLER

SPONSORING ORGANIZATION: St. Joseph School District

FIELD SUPERVISOR: Dr. Fred Richardson, Superintendent  
St. Joseph Public School District

UNIVERSITY ADVISOR: Dr. Carol Sheffer  
Western Michigan University

MAJOR FOCUS OF EXPERIENCE: Experience the planning, organizing, collecting data, and leadership styles used by the superintendent as he closed three schools.

DURATION: September 1, 1982 to September 30, 1983

#### RATIONALE:

Regardless of the leadership position that is held, there will be the challenge of developing an idea or program that will have to be approved by different groups of people. One has to organize a plan to accomplish this goal. A leader will have to work through groups to have his or her ideas accepted.

During this internship it is expected that the intern will acquire the skills necessary to accomplish the tasks described.

# Projected Nature Internship Experience

Objectives	Experiences & contacts	Terminal skills
A. Conceptual	The intern will	The intern will be able
1. <u>Learn</u> to organize and carry out a year long plan to close three elementary schools.	<u>work</u> with the superintendent in planning strategies.	to <u>plan</u> and organize projects.
2. Gather and analyze data which will support the decision to close three specific schools.	<u>write</u> a rationale that the superintendent will use as his data base.	<u>sort</u> out and present meaningful data to verify decisions.
3. To <u>acquire</u> an understanding of the leadership styles used by the superintendent.	<u>observe</u> the superintendent as he works with the board of education, administrators, and the public.	<u>know</u> which leadership style to use in different circumstances.
B. Human	The intern will	The intern will be able
1. <u>Learn</u> how to choose which groups to work with in the different phases of closing schools.	have planning sessions with the superintendent to <u>decide</u> which people he is going to work with in each phase of school closings.	to <u>analyze</u> what you want to accomplish and who can be helpful in obtaining your goals.
2. <u>Analyze</u> the people in the group.	<u>observe</u> the group dynamics taking place at the meetings. Meet with the superintendent to compare opinions of the best leadership style to be used.	<u>Learn</u> which leadership style to use with certain groups. "Read" people, learn what they expect from you.

## Projected Nature Internship Experience--Continued

Objectives	Experiences & contacts	Terminal skills
B. Human (continued)	The intern will	The intern will be able
3. <u>Acquire</u> an understanding of the role a superintendent has as the main leader in the district.	have meetings with the superintendent to <u>understand</u> the pressure he experiences as a leader.	<u>Learn</u> how to view a problem from a broader perspective. Seeing the big picture of the district.
C. Technical	The intern will	The intern will be able
1. <u>Learn</u> McGregor's management philosophy described as Theory X.	<u>observe</u> the superintendent's use of Theory X while carrying out Phase 1 of closing three schools.	to <u>use</u> Theory X in the future when the circumstances necessitate its use.
2. <u>Learn</u> McGregor's management philosophy described as Theory Y.	<u>observe</u> the superintendent's use of Theory Y while carrying out Phase 2 of closing three schools.	to <u>use</u> Theory Y in the future when the circumstances necessitate its use.
3. <u>Learn</u> McGregor's management philosophy described as Theory XY.	<u>observe</u> the superintendent's use of Theory XY while carrying out Phase 3 of closing three schools.	to <u>use</u> Theory XY in the future when the circumstances necessitate its use.

### Summary

This chapter presented a historical overview of the school system in which the internship was completed.

The growth and decline of enrollment were traced, noting the building and then closing of three elementary schools. The prospectus and the role of the intern was included.

The following chapter includes a history of the attempts that were made to close buildings in the school district, and an overview of the plan and the time line to close three buildings during the 1982-83 school year.

## CHAPTER II

### SCHOOL CLOSINGS

#### History, 1975-1981

Due to declining enrollment in many areas of the United States, school systems have had to close buildings. The procedure for closing schools has varied a great deal throughout the different school systems that have been faced with this problem. Closing schools is a very emotional issue for parents, students, and school employees and should be approached with a plan that best fits each situation and community.

As stated in Chapter I, the school district had been experiencing a steady decline in enrollment over the past 10 years. Because of the decline, the system had periodically considered closing schools since 1978.

The following is a brief history of how the school system had dealt with the problem of closing schools before the 1982-83 school year.

In 1975 there were enough empty classrooms to justify the closing of one of the six elementary schools operating at that time. To keep the community informed, the superintendent at that time called a public hearing to explain the situation and to allow people to express their opinions. There was such a public outcry against closing one of the neighborhood schools that the decision was made

not to take any action at that time.

In 1976 it was rumored (no official board statement) that one of the elementary schools might be closed. The community reacted by calling a meeting to organize against closing a school. This meeting was held in a church basement without any school personnel present. The board of education never did make any formal statement that they were considering closing an elementary school.

Closing schools became a moot issue until 1979. In May of 1979, Thomas Sinn and Associates presented a demographic analysis and population forecast to the board of education. The Sinn report indicated that the community population was declining and would continue to do so. It was evident that a study would have to be done to see how this decline would affect the school system.

On June 7, 1979, the board of education authorized the superintendent to appoint a representative committee of parents to study the impact of declining enrollment on the six elementary schools in the district. Their charge was to make recommendations on: (a) the future use of all elementary schools and (b) the assignment of students. This was to be completed by March 15, 1980.

The task force was made up of three parents from each of the six elementary buildings. The task force focused its study on:

1. The impact of the declining enrollment and its implications on the school system.
2. The educational needs of the elementary school child.
3. How the elementary schools and classrooms could best be used to meet the child's needs, in spite of enrollment decline.

4. To make proposals and recommendations to the school board:  
(a) proposals on school consolidation, (b) proposals on building use,  
and (c) proposals on pupil placement (St. Joseph Task Force, 1980).

After a 9-month study, the task force was unanimous in its opinion that two schools should be closed. Problems developed when the committee had to decide which buildings would be closed. With three people representing each elementary building, it became a matter of each group not wanting their building closed.

The committee voted to close Washington School, in the city, and Brown School in the township. The six representatives from Washington and Brown schools did not vote to have their schools closed.

The three representatives from Brown and the three representatives from Washington schools then each submitted a minority report to the board of education showing why their school should not be closed. The Brown School minority report recommended the closing of Washington and North Lincoln Schools. The Washington minority report recommended the closing of Brown and North Lincoln Schools.

After this information became available to the public, the board of education held a hearing to get the views of the community. A consensus could not be reached because each person was trying to protect their neighborhood school.

The board decided to reject all three recommendations and voted to close Jefferson School. At that time the top floor of Jefferson was being used for central administration, and elementary children were only on the lower floor. These students were reassigned to

Washington and Lincoln, the other two schools within the city.

This decision angered the people who had students in Jefferson School and the members of the task force for not following their recommendations.

#### Overview of Plan 1982

In the summer of 1982, a new superintendent was hired. He immediately recognized that running five elementary buildings which were half full was not educationally or financially sound. One of the goals that he established was to close two elementary buildings plus Jefferson School. Jefferson School was still being used as offices for central administration, custodial and food services, and the education association (union). Three rooms on the lower floor of Jefferson were being used for the district's alternative education program.

The new superintendent developed a plan to approach the problem of closing two elementary buildings and the Jefferson School. The new superintendent's plan involved three phases, each distinct and separate. These phases were:

1. Decide which two schools plus Jefferson to close.
2. Reassignment of students from the two closed buildings to the remaining three elementary buildings.
3. Find a use for the three elementary buildings after they are closed.

His basic philosophy was to eliminate all negative variables. He was careful not to do anything that would indicate that he



expected any problems.

He set distinct time lines for each phase and would not discuss Phase 2 or 3 before Phase 1 was accomplished. He did not want too many variables discussed at one time because it would confuse the issue and delay action.

The new superintendent established his decision-making process at the very beginning. He would make the final decision after input from the community and the management council (the administrators in the district) and make a recommendation to the board of education. He would include a rationale for the recommendation.

#### Summary

This chapter contained the history of past attempts made by the school district to close schools prior to the 1982-83 school year.

A general description about the new superintendent's plan, philosophy, and decision-making process for closing two schools plus Jefferson was described.

The following three chapters will deal with the three distinct and separate phases that the new superintendent followed to close two schools plus Jefferson.

Specifically, Chapter III will describe the process in closing two schools plus Jefferson and the leadership style used by the new superintendent.

## CHAPTER III

### CLOSING TWO BUILDINGS PLUS JEFFERSON

#### General Information

The new superintendent started his superintendency in the school district in August 1982. At that time, it was evident to the administrators, staff, board, and the community that there was a need to close two schools. The new superintendent, in his first few weeks in the district, solicited information from a great many people. It became evident to him that two schools plus Jefferson needed to be closed. He developed a plan which included the three distinct and separate phases. This plan and the philosophy behind it was explained in Chapter II.

#### Leadership Style

McGregor's (cited by Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1979) management philosophy, described as Theory X and Theory Y, is used to show the leadership style that the new superintendent used in closing two schools plus Jefferson. In closing two schools plus Jefferson, he followed the three management propositions of Theory X:

1. Management is responsible for organizing the productive enterprise--money, materials, equipment, people--in the interest of economic and educational ends.
2. With respect to people, it is a process of directing their efforts, motivating them, controlling their actions, modifying behavior to fit the needs of the organization.

3. Management consists of getting things done through other people. (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1979, p. 101).

#### Flow Chart

As seen on the flow chart shown in Figure 1, "Phase 1 Closing Schools," the new superintendent developed a process that he followed throughout Phase 1 of the plan. He used three groups, the elementary principals, PTO presidents, and community leaders, to receive information about what people were saying and feeling. He gave these groups information that they needed when communicating to the parents in the community. The PTO presidents were his spokespersons to the parents whose children would be affected by the closing of schools. The new superintendent kept in constant communication with the board members. Using this process he was always able to answer any questions they had and, in fact, gave them information they needed before they asked questions. The board knew that he would make the final recommendation to them with a complete rationale for the recommendation.

#### Role of the Elementary Principal

The elementary principals were key people in the process of closing schools because two of them were in charge of buildings that would be closed. They would be asked many questions by their constituents and could undermine the whole process if they did not believe in what the organization was doing. Their support had to be 100% without wavering either verbally or nonverbally when talking

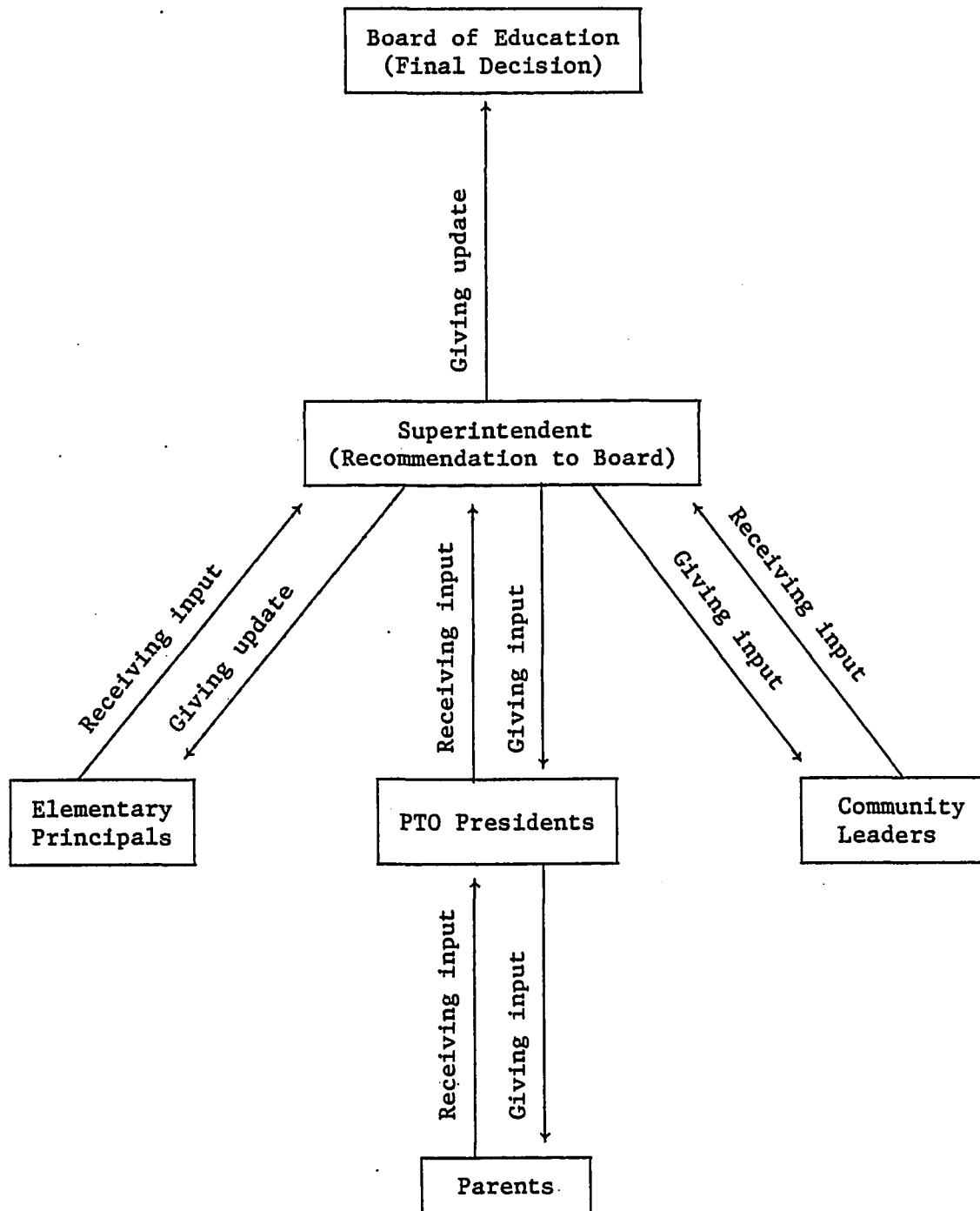


Figure 1

Flow Chart for School Closings,  
Phase 1, Closing Schools

with people. The superintendent guarded against this by working with the elementary principals in the following ways. Early in the process he asked them how many schools should be closed and which ones they would close. Each of the elementary principals believed that two schools should be closed and all agreed on which two schools should be closed. After getting their verbal commitment, the superintendent assured conformity to the position by reviewing in management council meetings what should be said and how to say it. Periodically he sought confirmation that principals believed in what was being done and inquired of them if anyone was going "belly up." Even with the emotionalism that was occurring as the deadline for closing became closer, the elementary principals were strong in their commitment to the organization. They did not go "belly up" with parents because they felt an ownership to the process.

#### Role of the PTO Presidents

On September 16, 1982, the superintendent met alone with the PTO presidents to get their input regarding the closing of two schools and the process for the closings. They agreed there was a definite need to close two schools. They agreed further that another task force was not necessary since enough information had been gathered to make the decision. At no time did the superintendent ask them to be part of the decision-making body concerning which schools would be closed. The superintendent met with the PTO presidents without the other administrators for the first meeting to establish that they were helping him. He asked them for their

support in this hard job that he had to do. He asked them to be his communication link between himself and the parents, to keep him informed of the parents' concerns. The superintendent emphasized to the PTO presidents that the schools had to be closed for educational reasons, that running buildings which were half full did not give the students the best educational opportunities. The superintendent met with the PTO presidents five times between September 16, 1982, and January 5, 1983, concerning the closing of schools. He mentioned their role at many board meetings and to people in the community.

#### Role of Community Leaders

Being new in the community, the superintendent made an effort to learn who the leaders of the community were. He made contact with them and kept them informed at informal meetings. There were many different groups in the community that he had to keep in contact with. He learned about these groups, and which individuals to contact through a well-known businessman who was a lifelong member of the community and an ex board member. This list consisted of:

1. "Fathers of the community": older people who have shaped the city and still had a great deal of influence on what happened but stayed in the background.
2. Eight people who were active in investments in the community.
3. Presidents of industry in the area.
4. Real estate people.

5. City and township governmental officials.
6. Past school board presidents.
7. Those who were active in the fine arts in the community.

These groups were very helpful in dealing with the political aspects of closing schools. Receiving the support of the "fathers of the community" helped to make the closing of schools successful. During informal sessions with these groups, the superintendent emphasized the cost savings to the district after closing the two schools.

#### Sequence of Events in Closing Two Schools

After meeting with the elementary principals and the PTO presidents in September, the superintendent presented the goals and timeline for closing two schools plus Jefferson to the board of education as reflected in the minutes of the regular board meeting on October 1, 1982.

[The] Superintendent . . . discussed with the Board the present status of the use being made of the various school buildings. He pointed out that due to declining enrollment there are many more classrooms than are being used and this situation exists throughout the district. He stated he plans to bring a recommendation to the Board in January setting out the alternatives available to permit the Board to make a decision on future building use. His recommendation could range from continuing the present building use to closing two elementary buildings and the Jefferson building, depending upon cost and affordability. . . . [The superintendent] suggested that a review be made of the previous task force study and stated he had no preconceived ideas or plans about what buildings could best be closed. It was his opinion, however, that a savings in cost would be substantial, because of a reduction in fixed costs, support staff and transportation. . . . [He] stated, too, that a study of alternative uses of the buildings would need to be made.

The Board discussed the idea of a task force being appointed, but it was generally felt that it would not be necessary to convene such a group, since the material prepared by the previous task force is available and still valid. (St. Joseph School District Board of Education minutes, October 1, 1982)

On December 9, 1982, at a management council meeting, one of the elementary principals brought two different computer printouts showing how the students could be moved to three buildings by geographical areas. The groundwork was being done on reassigning students to three buildings for the 1983-84 school year. This was a preliminary step in reassigning students even though it was before the January 10 deadline of closing two schools. There were times when the management council gathered background data on the next phase so they had the needed background material. This background material was not discussed outside of the management council.

The management council then brainstormed on the positive rationale for closing two schools. The reasons were: (a) it would be an educational advantage for the personnel as well as instructionally for the students because each remaining building would contain two sections of each grade level; (b) it would provide better utilization of the busses. The superintendent restated the management council's position at the end of this meeting, emphasizing that there are good reasons to close two schools, but that it will be a subjective decision as to which buildings to close because the cost saving was about the same no matter which two buildings were closed.

On December 10, the superintendent met with the PTO mothers. The numbers at these meetings had increased from six to approximately



15 women as the time line drew near. At this meeting, he emphasized what had been said at the December 9th management council meeting asking the women for their support after he made his final decision, even if it was their school to be closed.

The superintendent directed all administrators to develop a detailed list of the educational benefits gained by closing two schools. These were summarized by the intern. They were divided into two main headings: (1) instructional benefits from consolidation and (2) cost benefits from consolidation. The complete summary of the administrators' ideas can be found in Appendix A. The intern also submitted a rationale for closing Washington and North Lincoln Schools. This can be found in Appendix B. The superintendent used these summaries verbally at the January 3, 1983, board of education study session.

During this same time period, the middle of December, the superintendent had been meeting with the school lawyer to draw up a resolution for closing two schools which would be presented at the January 3, 1983, board meeting. The wording stated that "no students would be assigned to (school name)" (St. Joseph School District Board of Education minutes, January 3, 1983). This specific wording was used to show that they were not closing the buildings but were maintaining them. This would allow time to find a use for the buildings. The superintendent did not want to start Phase 3, Building Use, until Phases 1 and 2 were completed. The resolution also included the dates for student and faculty assignment and a development of a building use committee. The resolution follows:

Having determined that no students will be assigned to \_\_\_\_\_ School and to \_\_\_\_\_ School for the 1983-84 school year, the Board now further directs the administration to prepare and implement by no later than June 1, 1983, student and faculty assignments for school year 1983/84.

In addition to the above elementary schools that will not have students assigned to them beginning with the 1983/84 school year, the Board also directs the superintendent to close Jefferson School as soon as possible beginning with the 1983/84 school year.

It is further resolved that after assignment of students and teachers for school year 1983/84 the Board will then appoint a committee of citizens representing business, industry, financial institutions, governmental agencies and authorities within the school district to study and make recommendations to the Board concerning future utilization of school property in a manner which will provide benefit to the students and citizens of the school district, and which will encourage economic development within the school district. (St. Joseph School District Board of Education minutes, January 3, 1983)

On December 28, the superintendent met with the assistant superintendent for finance, the assistant superintendent for personnel, and the intern to review a rough draft containing the resolution and a rationale for closing Washington and North Lincoln Schools. This was a summary of all the input that he had received. The participants in the meeting made suggestions to improve the rationale. This document and the suggested changes can be found in Appendix C. At the conclusion of the meeting, it was decided that the superintendent would not hand out the rationale at the January 3 study session but would verbally review the rationale and summary.

Throughout the month of December, the superintendent kept in contact with board members and the leaders of the community concerning the recommendation that would be presented at the January 3

board of education study session. As of noon on January 3, he had the verbal support of all the board members, "father's of the community," and the governmental leaders in the district.

At the January 3 school board study session, the superintendent read the resolution naming the schools that would be closed. He reviewed who was involved in the decision and emphasized that a building use committee would be appointed. His presentation was tremendous. He was strong, honest, and forceful, but used humor to release the tension that existed. He stated that it was a particularly hard decision to make because all the schools were in excellent condition. He told a story about what usually happens to the bearer of bad news. He told the audience that this should have been done years ago and he wished it would have been. The people did feel sorry for him being in this position and felt that he was sincere and had done a good job of examining all options before deciding which two schools to close.

The one surprise at the meeting, which the superintendent learned of at 5:00 p.m. before the 7:00 p.m. meeting, was the objection to the closing of Washington School by the city government. The community development coordinator was sent by the city commission to say that the closing of Washington School was in conflict with what the city was doing, that is, keep up the central city and encourage people to move back into the city. The superintendent told him he understood how he felt and appreciated him expressing his views. The only other question from the audience was concerning what the total saving for the district would be after the two

schools were closed. He reported the saving would be \$140,000.

The week of January 3 was a crucial week. The recommendation that was to be presented at the January 10 board meeting had been made public and the parents at North Lincoln and Washington were reacting in an emotional way, as was expected. The superintendent needed to answer everyone's questions with calmness and logic. He remained in contact with board members, learning what pressures they were under, and answering their questions. He believed it was vitally important that the decision was not delayed past the regular board meeting of January 10. He reemphasized to everyone that it was a hard decision because the facilities and operational costs were relatively equal and that arguments could be made for and against any recommendation. It was also pointed out that no one was in disagreement that two schools should be closed, only that people did not want their school closed, which was understandable.

On January 5 the superintendent and a few board members met with the city manager, mayor, and a few city commissioners for the city. The board members explained their position and heard of the city's concerns regarding the closing of Washington School. On January 7 the city manager sent a letter to board members asking them to take time to consider their concerns. In reality the city commission was asking the board to delay their decision. The complete letter can be found in Appendix D.

On January 5 the superintendent also met with the PTO mothers from North Lincoln. They told him of a meeting being called on January 6 by the parents of North Lincoln to organize against the

closing of North Lincoln.

On January 6 the superintendent met with the PTO presidents, nine other parents, and the administrators of the district. At that meeting he asked for their support explaining that it was a hard decision and that the board would support his recommendation on January 10. He was told the Washington and North Lincoln parents were holding meetings in opposition to the recommendation. The superintendent asked the PTO representatives what they had heard. Their questions and his answers were recorded by the intern at this meeting. After the parents left, the superintendent expanded the list of questions by asking each administrator to relate any questions or concerns people had asked them. A copy of questions and answers can be found in Appendix E.

After the PTO representatives left, he reviewed the answers again for the elementary principals who would be at the parent meetings. He gave the elementary principals the following directions, "Don't be aggressive; give reasons and let people know that we care about all governmental agencies."

On January 7 the board members received a letter from the North Lincoln parents asking them not to close North Lincoln. The letter is in Appendix F.

From all the outcry and information received from all parties concerned, the superintendent produced two documents giving a rationale for transferring students from North Lincoln and Washington Schools. After reviewing these, it was decided that they would not be handed out, because, as stated before, there were logical

arguments against closing any of the schools. These documents can be found in Appendix G.

It was decided that the best approach to use at the January 10 board meeting would be to answer each question that had been asked. On January 7 the superintendent developed a document that had answers to questions most often asked. He used this at the January 10 board meeting but did not hand it out. This can be found in Appendix H.

On January 10 at the management council meeting, the superintendent reviewed the questions and answers with the administrators. He did this to inform the administration as to what to say and to rehearse for that evening's board meeting.

The board meeting of January 10 was attended by 260 people, almost all of whom were parents from the Washington and North Lincoln Elementary Schools. The superintendent started the meeting by answering the questions that people were most frequently asking. This took 50 minutes and helped to defuse the emotional aspect of the meeting. Many people who were ready to speak had answers before the question could be asked. About 20 people did ask questions and voiced concerns about closing their school. The township manager summarized and gave a written report to the board showing why North Lincoln should not be closed.

The board members and superintendent did not respond to the questions and concerns by the individual participants. They were emotional concerns and to answer them would have caused a turmoil at the meeting.

After 1 hour of parents expressing their negative feelings, a person complimented the board and the superintendent for having the courage to take a stand and do what was right. This was followed by one or two others who said the same thing. This defused the hostile atmosphere and the board proceeded to vote 7-0 to close Washington and North Lincoln Schools.

#### After the Closing

On January 13 a North Lincoln parent wrote a letter to the superintendent asking questions that the North Lincoln parents had now that their school had been closed. Some questions reflected the emotional aspect of the closing but most were genuine concerns they had about what would happen to their children. The superintendent met with the parent and then responded in writing. Copies of the letters can be found in Appendix I.

#### News Media

All of the board meetings were covered by two local radio stations and one local newspaper. The superintendent was available to them at all times to answer any questions and to keep them informed about any public meeting. Because of their awareness of the process, they reported the school closing in a fair manner. Their editorial comments were not negative. They supported closing two schools and did not get involved with which two schools to close.

### Summary

Chapter III has dealt with the leadership style and process that the superintendent used in closing two schools. The role of the elementary principals, PTO presidents, and the community leaders played in this process of closing two schools was explained. A sequence of events was reported which showed how the specific problems and the emotional aspect of school closings were solved by the superintendent.

The next chapter will describe how Phase 2, the reassignment of students, was accomplished. It examines the leadership style used by the superintendent to accomplish this successfully.



## CHAPTER IV

### STUDENT REASSIGNMENT

#### General Information

Phase 2 of the school closing, the reassignment of students, started the day after the board of education voted to close North Lincoln and Washington Schools.

The superintendent elicited the help of the elementary principals and the PTO parents to establish the final plan for transferring the students from Washington and North Lincoln to the other three elementary schools. These meetings were brainstorming sessions with each person given the responsibility and opportunity to devise a plan for transferring students. The superintendent emphasized that these were advisory groups who would give him input, but that he would make the final recommendation to the board of education. He set March 7 as the date for making his recommendation. The meetings were not structured and the participants came to a consensus concerning the proposed plans although they never voted on which proposed plan would go into effect.

#### Leadership Style

McGregor's (cited in Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1979) management philosophy described as Theory X and Theory Y is used to show the leadership style that the superintendent used in Phase 2, the

reassignment of students. The superintendent followed the four management propositions of Theory Y:

1. Management is responsible for organizing the elements of productive enterprise--money, materials, equipment, people--in the interest of economic (educational) ends.
2. People are not by nature passive or resistant to organizational needs. They have become so as a result of experience in organizations.
3. The motivation, the potential for development, the capacity for assuming responsibility, the readiness to direct behavior toward organizational goals are all present in people. Management does not put them there. It is a responsibility of management to make it possible for people to recognize and develop these human characteristics for themselves.
4. The essential task of management is to arrange organizational conditions and methods of operation so that people can achieve their own goals best by directing their own efforts toward organizational objectives. (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1979, pp. 102-103)

One of the most impressive characteristics of the superintendent was the ability to change the style of leadership depending on the task at hand and the group that he was working with. He had the ability to judge a situation and function in a way that brought the best results to the district. He had excellent skills as a group leader, no matter which leadership style he was using.

#### Flow Chart

As seen on the flow chart, Phase 2, Student Reassignment (Figure 2), the superintendent established the same groups to work with as in Phase 1. The way that he worked with these groups, however, was completely different than in Phase 1. The elementary principals

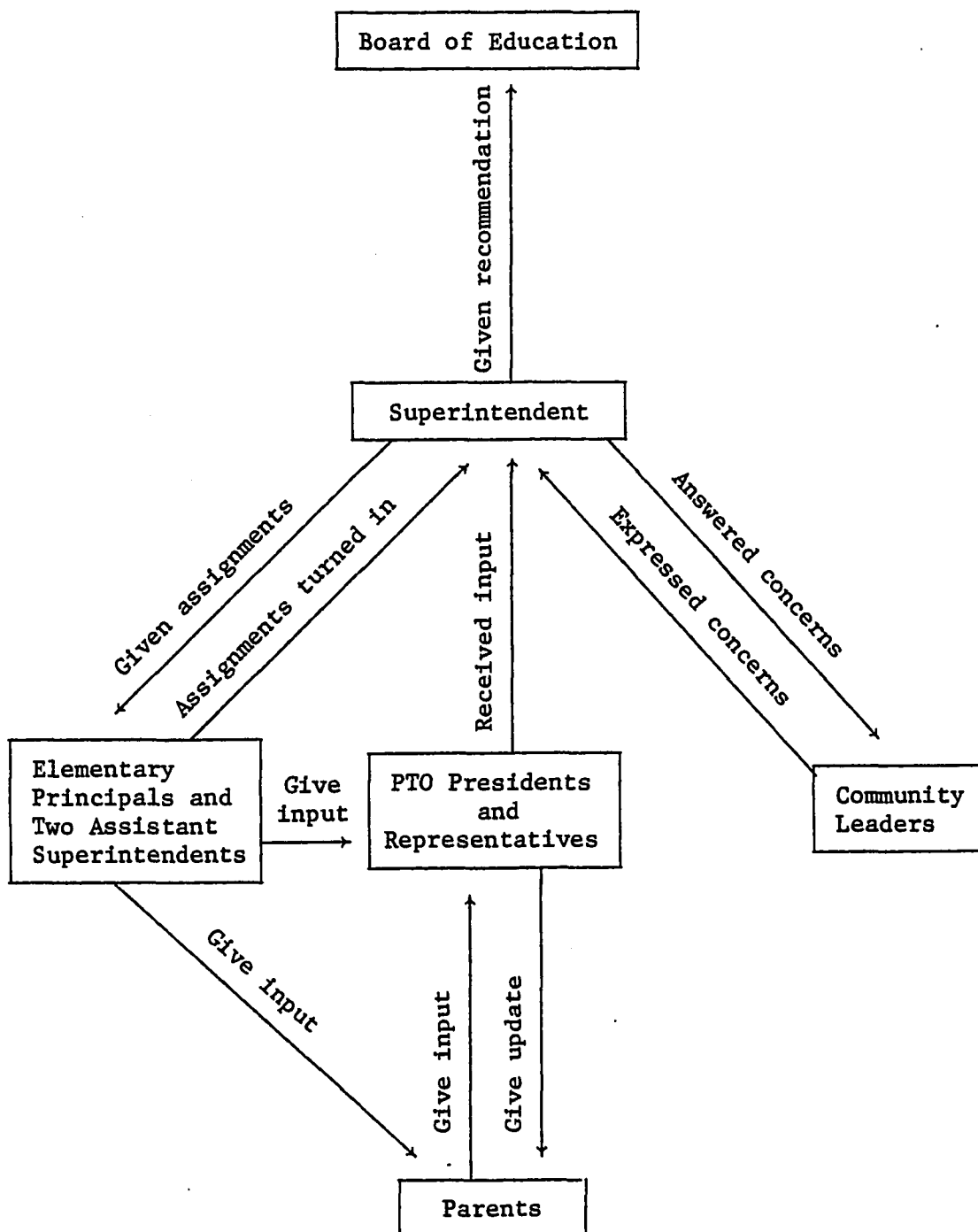


Figure 2

Flow Chart for Closing Schools,  
Phase 2, Student Reassignment

and the two assistant superintendents were given assignments which were reported to the PTO representatives and the superintendent. The PTO representatives received input from the elementary principals and the parents. They kept the parents informed and communicated all the ideas they heard to the superintendent. The community leaders were not involved in the decision-making process, but there was an open communication between them and the superintendent. He answered any concerns that they had.

#### Role of the Elementary Principals and Assistant Superintendents

The administrators helped to establish what needed to be done and the time line to complete it. They were given assignments by the superintendent and they reported to the PTO representatives. This included statistical information, staffing, and transportation plans. They related this information to the parents at the PTO meetings held by the superintendent.

#### Role of the PTO Representatives

The PTO representatives had the most important role in the decision-making process. They were given access to any information they believed they needed. They held meetings with all the PTO parents to hear their ideas on student reassignment. The PTO representatives had the opportunity to present their ideas on how to reassign the students. They had the ear of the superintendent, knowing that he was open to any and all of their ideas. This group also

developed plans and activities to make the changing of school easier for the students and their parents.

The PTO presidents handled the emotional response from the parents at their meeting. Because of the structure established by the superintendent, the meeting he held with the PTO representatives and the board of education were free of emotional overtones.

#### Role of the Community Leaders

The community leaders did not have an active part in Phase 2; because by the nature of the problem, it did not concern them directly as community leaders.

As the first tentative plans for reassignment emerged, the community development coordinator for the city expressed some concerns about busing students from two neighborhoods that have been defined as having a "critical potential for housing instability."

#### Sequence of Events for Student Reassignment

On January 11, 1983, the morning after the board of education approved the closing of two schools, the superintendent met with the management council. The purpose of the meeting was twofold. One purpose was to brainstorm and develop a list of items to accomplish in reassigning students. The superintendent used the list verbally when he met with the PTO parents on January 13. The other purpose was to identify the roll that the elementary principals would have in reassigning students and explain the function of the PTO. The elementary principals were directed to listen and give information

when they were asked at the PTO meeting. The PTO would be a liaison committee to the superintendent and he would make the final decision and recommendation to the board by March 7. The following is a list of the functions developed for the PTO liaison committee:

1. Sounding board.
2. Be positive.
3. Lead parties into new buildings.
4. Elicit information from other parents.
5. Restructure PTOs.
6. Planning PTO activities.
7. Plan end-of-year activities.
8. Continue leadership positions for continuity.
9. Establish a time line.
10. Criteria for student assignment would be prioritized.

On January 13 the superintendent met with the PTO representatives. He started the meeting by establishing his role as the decision maker after receiving input from them. He asked for any questions or concerns that they had. He dealt with each of these concerns individually, either answering them or saying that it would be dealt with as a function of their committee. The questions raised by PTO representatives can be found in Appendix J. The PTO representatives brainstormed and developed a list of items that should be accomplished. The list included:

1. That they work together in a positive way.
2. They asked for the administrators put together a time line for: (a) assigning students, (b) busing problems, (c) PTO

activities, (d) end of year visits to "new" school, and (e) PTO elections.

3. Student and staff assignments.

4. Prepare the rooms that were not being used.

5. Plan social activities, i.e., open house for students after assignments are made.

6. Offer suggestions for people to serve on the building use committee and inform the public as to what will happen to the buildings.

7. Set criteria for student assignments: (a) total redistricting, (b) try to keep families together, (c) try to equalize class size, (d) have two sections of each grade level in each school, and (e) try to keep neighborhood together (low priority).

8. Suspend LIFO. (LIFO is Board Policy 5020 which deals with the assignment of students to elementary schools. LIFO stands for last in--first out. A copy of Board Policy 5020 can be found in Appendix K.) This policy was suspended by the board of education at their February 8 meeting.

At the January 17 management council meeting, the administrators established a time line for accomplishing the items developed by the PTO representatives for reassigning students. The following is the time line that was established for student, faculty, and equipment transfer:

January

17 NTEA update

21 SJEA update notice of retirement-leave

.21 Pink slip

27 Student reassignment (tentative)

#### February

1 IMC move begins

14 Staff layoff

14 Board policy suspension

#### March

1 Student assignment

1 Faculty assignment

1 Administrative assignment

1 Support staff assignment

15 New staff orientation

#### April

1 Bus routes

1 Building and site preparation

#### June

1 General move

9 Students at new schools (1/2 day)

#### July-August

Furniture and equipment moved to new locations during vacation period

The superintendent assigned one elementary principal and the assistant superintendent for curriculum the task of developing a tentative plan or plans to reassign students. This was to be accomplished by January 21. The material needed to perform this task was on computer printouts which were obtained in the fall. Publicly



Phase 1 and Phase 2 were separate, but background material had been gathered for Phase 2 prior to the completion of Phase 1.

On January 21 the two administrators presented their tentative plans, A and B, for student reassignment to the management council for their reaction. Other possible options were given by the management council. It was concluded that a blank map also be presented to the PTO representatives showing that they had the option of developing their own plan. Student reassignment Plans A and B can be found in Appendix L.

On January 27 the superintendent met with the PTO representatives. One parent, the emerging leader of the group, reported that the PTOs would like to sponsor an open house and balloon launch on May 1 at Brown, Lincoln, and E. P. Clarke elementary schools. This would aid in a smooth transition for the students being assigned to these schools. The PTOs discussed other activities that could be done in the fall at the elementary schools to ensure a smooth beginning.

The time line prepared by the administrators was distributed and approved by the PTO representatives. This confirmed that their input from the January 13 meeting had been important.

The tentative Plans A and B, plus the blank map were presented by the two administrators. The PTO representatives asked objective questions about these plans. Using his skill as a group leader, the superintendent headed off a movement by the group to vote on Plans A and B.

One parent asked if people could voluntarily place their sixth graders at Upton Junior High School, a seventh and eighth grade building. The group decided to survey all the sixth grade parents to obtain their opinions and to report back to the group.

The superintendent asked each PTO president to call a PTO meeting for the last week of January to inform parents of the tentative Plans A and B for student reassignment. He wanted them to obtain parent response and ask for other suggestions. The administrators offered to be at these meetings.

At the February 8 PTO representatives meeting, the superintendent set the tone for the meeting by reclarifying the role of the group. He would make the final decision and make a recommendation of the best plan to reassign students to the board of education at the March 7 board meeting. He did not want the group to splinter and take sides by fighting for their own local interest. It was felt that this group would be invaluable in helping with a smooth transition after the students were reassigned.

Each PTO president reported on their last PTO meeting. The consensus was that sixth grade students should not be placed in Upton Junior High School. Four of the schools felt that Plan A was the least disruptive and two presented their own plans called Plan O and Plan M. Plans O and M can be found in Appendix M.

After a great deal of discussion about Plans A, B, O, and M, the group decided that they would never arrive at a plan to satisfy everyone and turned to the superintendent to establish a final plan for the reassignment of students.

The superintendent closed the meeting by stating that the final plan would be shared with the PTO representatives at their next meeting on February 21.

On February 21 the superintendent met with the PTO representatives. The first part of the meeting dealt with the PTO representatives finalizing the social events to help with the students' transition. The superintendent then took control of the meeting and presented the final plan. The no-nonsense tone of the meeting can best be reflected in the minutes from that February 21 PTO representative meeting:

[The superintendent] discussed the proposed map and the redistricting. This map meets the four criteria that were agreed upon by the PTO representatives at the January 13, 1983 meeting:

1. Total redistricting,
2. Try to keep families together,
3. Try to keep neighborhoods together, and
4. Equalize class size.

It is anticipated that the Board of Education will approve this map at its March 7th meeting. The administration will then proceed with the assignment of students, and it is expected that this will be completed on target. The parents will be notified, by letter, where their children will attend school next year.

It is important to keep in mind that there will be possible swing areas, E.G., Brown/Clarke - along Washington Avenue, Maiden Lane, Venus, Wilson and Lane Court. For Brown/Lincoln, Market Street North and South, Ship, Pearl, the 400 Block of Archer at Red Arrow Highway, LaSalle and Howard Streets.

. . . [The assistant superintendent of finance] stated that presently 14 buses, plus a bus for special education students, are being used. He estimates that these can be reduced to 10 buses next year.

. . . [The superintendent] stated that administrator assignments will be announced at the next PTO meeting, but that teacher assignments are running a little late. (St. Joseph School District PTO representatives, 1983)

The finalized plan can be found in Appendix N.

The plan for student reassignment was approved March 7 at the board of education meeting by a 7-0 board vote. The recommendation read:

It was moved by Trustee . . . , supported by Trustee . . . , to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent that the student assignment plan, which is attached to these minutes, be adopted and that the boundary lines not be interpreted as permanently fixed, but that they be subject to change from time to time as the need arises in order to achieve reasonable class balances. (St. Joseph School District Board of Education minutes, March 7, 1983)

There was only one objection voiced at the board meeting. The superintendent and the board members expressed their concern and told the parent they would work on resolving his problem.

#### The News Media

The paper and radio stations covered the meetings with the PTO representatives but did not know how to report on them as they were brainstorming sessions that did not arrive at a definite conclusion.

#### Summary

Chapter IV has dealt with the leadership style and process used by the superintendent to reassign students. The role the elementary principals, PTO representatives, and community leaders played in reassigning students are included. A sequence of events was

reported which showed how the specific problems and the emotional aspect were handled by the superintendent.

The next chapter will describe how Phase 3, Building Use, was approached by the superintendent. His leadership style will be examined.

## CHAPTER V

### BUILDING USE

#### General Information

What will happen to the buildings after they are closed? This is the question that the superintendent heard when people knew that two schools would be closed. The superintendent did not discuss this phase with the management council, the board of education, or the general public during Phases 1 and 2. He set three distinct phases and did not publicly work on one until the other was completed. Being a good leader, he did prepare material and ideas ahead of time so that he was prepared when Phase 3, Building Use, started.

In September the intern contacted people in the community forming a list of individuals who could help the superintendent throughout all three phases of school closing. This list was explained in detail in Chapter III.

The wording in the resolution to close two schools plus Jefferson was written to help in Phase 3, Building Use. The resolution stated that students would not be assigned to these buildings. By not officially closing the buildings, the district could wait and take its time to explore all possibilities before disposing of the buildings. A time line was not established for the disposal of the buildings.

### Leadership Style

The superintendent's leadership style varied when working with the board and the building use committee on Phase 3. He fluctuated from McGregor's (cited in Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1979) Theory X and Theory Y depending on the task at hand. He had the ability and skills to conduct meetings to meet the expectations of those in the group.

### Flow Chart

As shown on the flow chart (see Figure 3), Phase 3 did not involve a great many people. The board of education had a different function in the building use phase than they did in Phases 1 and 2. The board members were active participants at informal meetings. They asked questions, gave advice, received information, and reacted to it before it was presented to the building committee. They had ownership in the final decision.

The building use committee was a working committee that had their own ideas which represented the community view point.

The assistant superintendent for business was the administrator working closely with the superintendent, carrying out assignments as directed.

### Role of the Building Use Committee

The members of the building use committee were made up of people who represented the different areas and interests of the

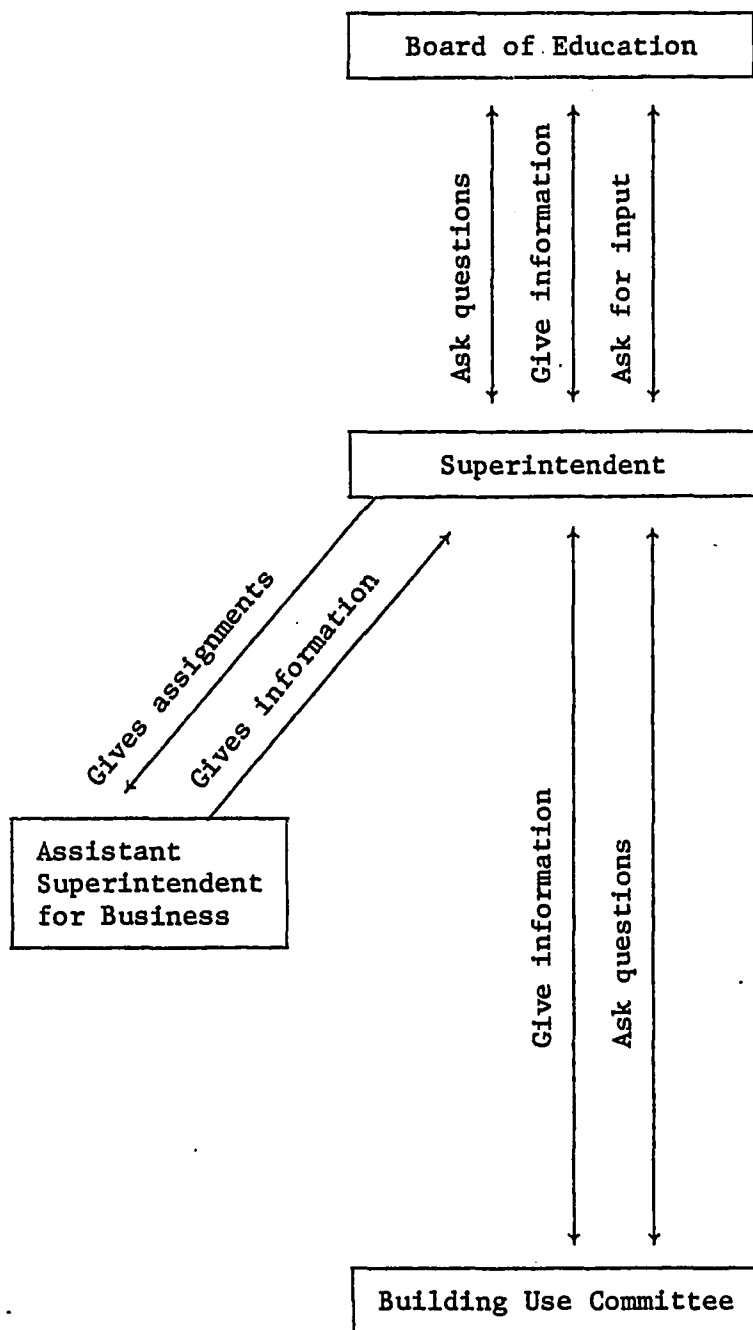


Figure 3

Flow Chart for Closing Schools,  
Phase 3, Building Use



district. The city managers from the city and township where Washington and North Lincoln Schools are located were on the building use committee. Their role was twofold: (1) to help with the procedure for finding a suitable use for these buildings and (2) to be a watchdog for the community so the board did not take any action that would harm the community.

#### Sequence of Events

There was a great deal of background work that was done before the committee was appointed on March 7, 1983.

The superintendent had been working with the school lawyer since October to explore all the legal ramifications concerning the closing of schools and the disposition of the buildings. The school lawyer researched the following:

1. Proper legal wording for resolutions passed by the board when they closed two schools.
2. Considerations when developing a board policy for disposition or sale of school property. These were stated in a three-page letter from the lawyer. Because of the confidentiality of this letter, it cannot be included in the Appendices.
3. Court cases involving school districts that improperly disposed of their buildings.

The superintendent had obtained confidential material from the following districts that explain the procedure they used in closing schools. These documents were received from Livonia, Grand Rapids, Warren Woods, and the Jackson Public Schools. Because of the

confidentiality of this material it cannot be included in the appendices of this report.

The superintendent collected 17 articles on what other school districts had done with their closed buildings. The intern obtained a listing from the Michigan Association of School Boards showing how 17 school districts in Michigan have disposed of their buildings.

Throughout the year, the superintendent had been receiving requests for the use of the closed buildings. These were filed and were not acted on until after the first building use committee meeting in May. This will be dealt with later in this chapter.

At the March 7 board of education meeting, when the student re-assignment was approved, the superintendent asked the board to narrow the list of possible members for the building use committee to nine so they could be appointed at the March 14 board meeting. The board had this list before the meeting, again showing that the superintendent had done his background work on Phase 3 before Phase 2 ended.

The original list of potential members on the building use committee was made up of volunteers and people suggested by the board of education. The board of education had a large role in selecting the members of the building use committee.

The people representing the following positions were appointed to the building use committee at the March 14 board meeting:

1. St. Joseph Township Manager, serving as private citizen.
2. Attorney with Ryan, McQuillan, VanderPloeg, and Fette.
3. Director of marketing, Clark Equipment Company.

4. Teacher on leave.
5. St. Joseph Township Clerk, represents St. Joseph Township.
6. President of Bell-Molhoek Insurance Company.
7. President of Peoples State Bank.
8. Director of marketing, Whirlpool Ad Center.
9. City manager for the city of St. Joseph, represents the city of St. Joseph.

The first meeting of the building use committee was held on May 4, 1983. The superintendent outlined the task of the building use committee as follows:

1. It is an advisory committee, and the board of education will make the final decision about building use.
2. The maximum length of the committee will be 1 year.
3. The committee's specific assignment is to suggest a use for the three school buildings which have been closed by the board of education.
4. The committee is to be an objective group for the school district.

The school attorney outlined the legal implications for using the closed buildings. He stated that:

There were no known local ordinances that would prohibit the completion of our task, but local government agencies would be contacted concerning zoning ordinances. The attorney pointed out that it is the responsibility of the district to ensure that no action is taken that might lead to the segregation of surrounding school districts, which could result in legal action. He cited different cases where this has happened. He recommended that this committee develop a policy for building use and present it to the Board of Education for adoption. (St. Joseph School District Building Use Committee, 1983)

The superintendent reported that the buildings would be appraised and the results sent to the committee. The members agreed to tour the buildings. The superintendent will be the chairman of the committee and stated that the emphasis for the meeting will be on the quality not quantity.

The superintendent took firm control of the meeting to establish the roles of the members and how they can help the district.

At the May 9 board of education meeting, the superintendent gave a report regarding the building use committee. The report follows:

The first meeting of the Building Use committee occurred on May 4, 1983. At that meeting the following items were discussed:

1. Committee Task Definition--It was pointed out that the Building Use committee is an advisory group to the Board of Education and that the Board of Education may choose to accept future recommendations from the committee, as presented, modify the recommendations, or reject recommendations, inasmuch as the Board of Education is ultimately responsible for the future use of buildings. It was noted that the committee would exist for no more than one year, and it was assumed that the committee work would be completed before that time limit was reached. It was also pointed out that the purpose of the committee was to work with and to recommend to the Board of Education future use of Jefferson, North Lincoln and Washington buildings. In addition, committee members were cautioned not to develop a relationship with special interest groups, because the purpose of this committee is to serve the best interest of the complete St. Joseph Public Schools District.

2. The School Attorney . . . discussed with the committee legal implications in reference to future building use.

3. The committee was informed that building appraisals will be made by an outside appraisal organization, so that as near as possible the true value of these facilities could be determined.

4. Arrangements for building tours are in the process, so that each member of the committee may be completely familiar with each of the buildings.

5. Future meetings probably will be held at 4:00 p.m., in the Jefferson School building.

6. Any inquiries about the buildings or communications from the committee are to be facilitated through the Superintendent's office. (St. Joseph School District Board of Education minutes, May 9, 1983)

The building use committee had their second meeting on August 23, 1983. The superintendent reviewed the building appraisals and shared them with the committee members. Because of the confidentiality of the appraisals, the information cannot be shared or included in the appendices of this report.

The superintendent asked for a committee to develop a policy for future building use. This policy will be presented to the board of education as an action item. William Foley, Robert Molhoek, and Lee Selent volunteered to work with the superintendent and the assistant superintendent to develop the policy. They met on Thursday, September 1, at 12:00 noon.

William Foley suggested that a news release be drafted to outline the committee's progress. He and Janel Helsley will work with Dr. Richardson to prepare the release. They met on September 1 at 12:00 noon, and the draft was to be presented to the committee for approval.

The superintendent changed leadership styles during this meeting forming committees and reporting back to the group for the approval of the committee's work. This will help to develop the committee's ownership in finding a use for the building.

After a lengthy discussion, it was decided that the city of St. Joseph and the St. Joseph Township be formally approached to see if they are interested in Washington and North Lincoln, which are located in their governmental areas.

The superintendent reported that the owner of the St. Joseph Beauty College had donated that institution to the St. Joseph Public Schools. This will become part of the community education program. The beauty college began operation on October 1 at Jefferson School and will more than cover the cost of maintaining the Jefferson building. Other inquiries about leasing or renting rooms at Jefferson have been received. These will be finalized shortly. Agreement was reached that Jefferson is the building that the district will keep. This leaves two buildings that will need to be disposed of, Washington and North Lincoln. Since my internship is ending, this paper will not reflect the results of how Washington and North Lincoln were disposed of.

#### Summary

This chapter contains general information about school closings, the flow chart for Phase 3, the role of the building use committee, and the sequence of events in finding a use for the buildings. An analysis of Dr. Richardson's leadership style is discussed throughout the chapter.

The next chapter will deal with this writer's summary and evaluation of the internship served at St. Joseph schools.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

The internship with the superintendent of the St. Joseph Public Schools in St. Joseph, Michigan, provided an opportunity to observe and to work with a person in a leadership position as he developed and carried out a year long plan to close two buildings plus Jefferson school in his district.

The internship was unique in the fact that the intern had the opportunity to be involved in all aspects of the process. The intern worked with the superintendent from September 1982 through September 1983. The intern had the opportunity to work on special projects during the summer and on vacations.

Working during this extended time period gave the intern the opportunity to have many conferences with the superintendent so he could learn what was to be accomplished overall and at specific meetings. The intern was the recorder at these meetings, so he could determine if these objectives were met. The conferences with the superintendent after meetings gave the intern the opportunity to have input and discuss the group dynamics that had taken place.

The superintendent had excellent skills as a group leader, seeing the big picture, planning his goals and objectives, obtaining background material, and in using the right leadership style. He varied his leadership style depending on the task at hand and the group he was working with.

This internship allowed the intern an opportunity to learn many leadership skills that could not have been learned from his position as assistant principal of a high school. The following is a listing of the intern's learning experiences that will help him in future leadership positions that he may hold:

1. Developing an overall plan and carrying it out by being confident, positive, not letting negative variables interfere, and trusting those that are helping to carry out the organization objectives.

2. Preparing ahead by gathering background information. Even though the superintendent had three distinct phases for closing schools, he worked on Phases 2 and 3 as Phase 1 was being carried out. This way he was knowledgeable and could confidently start the next phase the day after the completion of one.

3. Developing ownership of different groups to carry out the objectives. In his plans to close schools, the following groups felt an ownership: the elementary parents, PTO presidents and representatives, building use committee, and the board of education.

4. Observing the leadership style of the superintendent was exciting. He has mastered all different styles and carried out a different one in each of the three phases as was explained in this report.

The superintendent's skills as a leader are the best that this intern has ever observed. He has the ability to read a group and react as they would expect him to react. He sets the proper tone for the meeting with the use of humor or telling a story that will



actually have people feeling sorry for him for the decision he has to make. He would direct the role of the group by explaining his decision-making process to them. The responsibility for the final decision was clearly his but only after input from the group. The amount of input would vary with the leadership style he was using.

The total experience has been valuable to the professional growth of the intern. The skills which were learned can be applied to his present position as well as in the future.

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- St. Joseph School District Task Force. Final report of the task force on building use for St. Joseph public elementary school system. March 10, 1980.

## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix A

### A Summary of Administrators' List of Educational Benefits Gained by Closing Two Schools

### Subheadings

- I. Instructional benefits from consolidation
  - A. Academic benefits
  - B. Student benefits
  - C. Community benefits
- II. Cost benefits from consolidation
  - A. Staff reduction
  - B. Building operation
  - C. Reduce travel of itinerants
  - D. Consolidation of equipment
  - E. Future millage
  - F. Transportation

## Reasons

## I. Instructional benefits from consolidation

## A. Academic benefits

1. All the elementary buildings could receive services in both reading and math from the Title I program
2. Each building will have more than one grade level
  - a. Team teaching can take place so the teachers' strengths can be utilized and shared
  - b. Curriculum improvements will take place as the teachers share ideas
  - c. It will allow for more creative teaching alternatives to take place
  - d. More flexibility in assigning students to different classrooms in each building. This will aid in:
    - i. Student-teacher compatibility
    - ii. Student-student compatibility
    - iii. Allow for the possibility of more homogeneous instruction
    - iv. Allow for the opportunity to match learning styles and teaching styles
  - e. Allow for flexibility in grouping students who need special arrangements such as:
    - i. GLO (Gifted program)
    - ii. Special ed.--mainstreaming will be easier so there will be less need to bus them
    - iii. Title I--allow for a special ed. room in each building
3. Allow for better use of the itinerant teachers in physical education, music, art, speech, and reading
  - a. Less travel time and more student contact

4. Allow for consolidation of materials and supplies such as:
  - a. AV equipment
  - b. Library
  - c. Computer hardware and software
5. Allow an administrator to be in each building.
6. Allow for one special ed. room in each building

B. Student benefits

1. Allow for more efficient use of the K-12 counselor and social worker
2. Students will have exposure to a greater number of students thus allowing for greater cultural enrichment
  - a. More choices in choosing companions
  - b. Increase the likelihood of students meeting peers with common interests, goals, and ambitions
3. Buildings with 100% capacity will allow for a better overall educational environment and experiences
  - a. The building will be "alive," more academic and art projects, etc.

C. Community benefits

1. More active and creative PTO, fewer fund raisers that are more productive
2. Better coordination of civic and government programs in the schools
3. More stability to families. This will allow greater flexibility in placing students from the same family in one building
4. A focus on what is needed in the school system, not just "our neighborhood"--a decrease in parochialism

II. Cost benefits from consolidation

A. Reduction of staff

- B. Reduction of building operation, insurance, and repair
- C. Reduce travel of itinerants
- D. Consolidation of AV equipment, furniture, office machines, library books, etc., and saving on replacement of these in the future
- E. Less chance of asking for millage in the future
- F. Transportation--possibility of combining the secondary bus runs



## ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 12, 1982

TO: Fred A. Richardson, Superintendent .

FROM: ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR BUSINESS AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: Estimate of Selected Savings to Close Two Elementary Schools and Jefferson

## Support Staff:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Reduction</u>	<u>\$ Savings/Position</u>	<u>Total Savings</u>
Principal	1	\$33,000	\$33,000
Secretary	2	10,575	21,150
Custodian	2 3/8	16,120	38,300
Library Aide	0	(no savings - follows students)	
Lunchroom Supervisor	1	1,150	1,150
Cook	0	(no savings - follows students)	
Employee Fringe			
Benefit Costs			<u>10,900</u>
			\$104,500

## Building Operations: (Based on 81-82 actual)

	<u>BR</u>	<u>CL</u>	<u>JE</u>	<u>LI</u>	<u>NL</u>	<u>WA</u>	<u>Apex 2 Bldg And Jeff</u>
Heat (1/3 savings)	\$5,250	\$4,350	\$4,300	\$5,400	\$5,100	\$4,275	\$13,800
Electricity							
(1/10 savings							
cost passed to							
other bldgs)	500	450	100	450	500	425	1,000
Water (2/3 savings)	450	0	300	300	425	575	1,000
Telephone	750	850	-	-825	775	1,100	1,600
Snow Removal	500	1,050	500	1,200	850	200	1,500
Yard Work		(no savings unless sold/leased)					0
Trash Removal		(no savings - follows students)					0
Bldg Maintenance	5,100	10,700	1,000	8,100	8,500	5,000	15,000
Cleaning Supplies	500	500	100	700	500	500	<u>1,100</u>
							\$35,000
Combined Total							\$139,500

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## **Appendix B**

### **A Rationale Developed by the Intern for Closing Washington and North Lincoln Schools**

## Rationale for Closing Washington and North Lincoln Schools

### I. Classrooms and size of building

#### A. Washington and Lincoln

1. Two of the smallest--14 classrooms that hold 420 students
2. Could not close Clarke or Lincoln because they have 16 and 17 classrooms, and hold 480 and 540 students

(Note) Using the variable of number of classrooms and size, the choice became closing two of these three schools:

- a. Washington
- b. North Lincoln
- c. Brown

### II. Age of buildings

#### A. Washington, 1937

#### B. Brown and North Lincoln--both 1953. Choice becomes either:

1. Brown
2. North Lincoln

### III. Buildings which will best serve the students in the district (area):

- A. Lincoln--in the city
- B. Brown--one side of the district
- C. Clarke--one side of the district

The choice was Clarke or North Lincoln on one side of the district and it had to be Clarke that stays open because of classroom size and number of students that it would hold.

Washington--city

Lincoln--city

ad to keep Lincoln open--because of number of classrooms and students and age of building.

## Appendix C

### Draft of the Resolution and Rationale for Closing Washington and North Lincoln Schools<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This document contains the changes made on the draft.

DRAFT

December 29, 1982

THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATION IS IN KEEPING WITH A PREVIOUS COMMITMENT BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ENSURE THE LEAST DISRUPTIVE PROCEDURE IN MAKING DECISIONS ON FUTURE BUILDING USE. IT IS BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS HISTORY OF THE ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL DISTRICT AS IT RELATES TO BUILDING USE, A 1980 STUDY CONDUCTED BY THE TASK FORCE ON BUILDING USE, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OUR CURRENT ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF, AND THE GUIDANCE OF PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION OFFICERS FROM THE VARIOUS SCHOOLS.

IT IS THE BELIEF OF THE SUPERINTENDENT THAT THE ST. JOSEPH BOARD OF EDUCATION IS COMMITTED TO THE CONCEPT OF SUBSTANCE RATHER THAN SIZE OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT. THEREFORE, THIS RECOMMENDATION IS ~~PREPARED ON THE ASSUMPTION~~ *that we will continue the high standards of education in terms of student achievement and academic excellence.*

IT IS, THEREFORE, THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT THAT THE FOLLOWING THREE-PART RESOLUTION BE ADOPTED:

1. HAVING DETERMINED THAT NO STUDENTS WILL BE ASSIGNED TO NORTH LINCOLN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND TO WASHINGTON SCHOOL FOR THE 1983/84 SCHOOL YEAR, THE BOARD NOW FURTHER DIRECTS THE ADMINISTRATION TO PREPARE AND IMPLEMENT BY NO LATER THAN JUNE 1, 1983, STUDENT AND FACULTY ASSIGNMENTS FOR SCHOOL YEAR 1983/84.
2. IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS THAT WILL NOT HAVE STUDENTS ASSIGNED TO THEM BEGINNING WITH THE 1983/84 SCHOOL YEAR, THE BOARD ALSO DIRECTS THE SUPERINTENDENT TO CLOSE JEFFERSON SCHOOL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BEGINNING WITH THE 1983/84 SCHOOL YEAR.
3. IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, AFTER ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS FOR SCHOOL YEAR 1983/84, THE BOARD WILL THEN APPOINT A COMMITTEE OF CITIZENS REPRESENTING BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND AUTHORITIES WITHIN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT TO STUDY AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD CONCERNING FUTURE UTILIZATION OF SCHOOL PROPERTY IN A MANNER WHICH WILL PROVIDE BENEFIT TO THE STUDENTS AND CITIZENS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT, AND WHICH WILL ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT.

RESOLUTION RATIONALEPART 1INSTRUCTIONAL

- MINIMUM OF TWO SECTIONS, PER GRADE, PER BUILDING
- MORE EQUITABLE CLASS SIZE
- IMPROVED INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS UTILIZATION
- IMPROVED ITINERANT TEACHER TIME USE

- IMPROVED STUDENT GRADE PLACEMENT *Teacher*

- IMPROVED MAINSTREAMING OPPORTUNITIES

- IMPROVED STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO *improve*

- IMPROVED SPECIAL PROGRAM UTILIZATION, SUCH AS, GLO, TITLE I, SPECIAL-ED *4R*

- IMPROVED AND INCREASED STUDENT INTERACTION

- *Improved Learning Environment*

COST

- 100% UTILIZATION OF BUILDINGS
- MAXIMUM BENEFIT OF FIXED COSTS
- REDUCTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND OTHER SUPPORT STAFF
- DELAY OF MILLAGE INCREASE REQUEST
- MAXIMUM TRANSPORTATION EQUIPMENT USE

*minimize the cost of sec 504 - less maint. & log.*

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*Improved Placement of students within a building.*

*More efficient use of R-12 Counselor*

*Marilyn C. Miller*

#### GEOGRAPHIC AREA

- LOCATION OF THE THREE SCHOOLS WOULD GIVE AN EQUITABLE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION
- MOST IDEAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT *Buildings*
- PROTECTED ENVIRONMENT FOR STUDENT WELFARE
- MOST REMOVED FROM HIGH TRAFFIC AREAS

*Improved Family/School Interaction*  
DELAYED MILLAGE INCREASE REQUEST *Improved PTO - opp. & Position*

- MILLAGE INCREASE REQUEST MAY BE DELAYED

#### EARLY PLANNING FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

- EARLY ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS WILL MINIMIZE ANXIETY FOR THE BEGINNING OF THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR
- STAFFING ASSIGNMENTS ARE MADE DEARLY FOR THE BEST POSSIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL BENEFIT

#### EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

- THE COMMUNITY OF ST. JOSEPH HAS BEEN COMMITTED TO ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE, AND IT HAS ALWAYS ATTEMPTED TO UTILIZE THE RESOURCES IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THAT EXCELLENCE
- IN STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE, RESOURCES WILL BE USED TO MORE DIRECTLY BENEFIT THE STUDENTS RATHER THAN TO PAY FOR PARTIALLY USED BUILDINGS

#### PART 2

- REDUCTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE SPACE
- REDUCTION IN ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS AS THEY RELATE TO FACILITY USE
- COMPLETION OF DISTRICT LONG-RANGE GOALS TO CLOSE JEFFERSON BUILDING

#### PART 3

- ELICIT THE BEST THINKING FROM THE COMMUNITY FOR FUTURE BUILDING UTILIZATION, WHICH WILL CREATE THE MAXIMUM BENEFIT FOR THE STUDENTS OF THE ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
- TO PROTECT THE FUTURE PLANNING OF THIS COMMUNITY
- TO ENSURE MAXIMUM IMMEDIATE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT
- TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE FUTURE USE OF BUILDINGS
- TO INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY IN RESOLVING A COMMUNITY PROBLEM
- TO ENSURE MAXIMUM BENEFIT FOR THE COMMUNITY

#### SUMMARY

*To ensure best of the community's attention in building*

THE ABOVE RECOMMENDATION WAS A VERY DIFFICULT ONE BECAUSE THE FACILITIES OF THE ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL DISTRICT ARE RELATIVELY EQUAL AND THE OPERATIONAL COSTS, BY BUILDING, ARE NOT SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT. IT IS APPARENT THAT ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST ANY RECOMMENDATION COULD EXIST, BUT THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION IS THAT THIS DISTRICT MUST BE CONSERVATIVE IN THE USE OF ITS FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND ATTEMPT TO MAINTAIN THE HIGHEST QUALITY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR ITS STUDENTS. THE TIME HAS COME WHEN OUR EXPENDITURES MUST BE REDUCED WITHOUT AN ACCOMPANYING REQUEST FOR A REVENUE INCREASE.

IT IS THE OPINION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT, BASED ON THE CURRENT DATA, THAT NO FURTHER SCHOOLS WILL NEED TO BE CLOSED WITHIN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. HOWEVER, AS CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE AND IN LIGHT OF DECLINING STUDENT ENROLLMENTS, IT IS CONCEIVABLE WE MAY BE CONFRONTED WITH FUTURE DECISIONS ON BUILDING USE.

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**Appendix D**

**Letter from the City Manager to Four Board Members  
Concerning the Closing of Washington School**



# THE *City of St. Joseph*

Administrative Center

620 Broad Street

*St. Joseph, Michigan 49085*

WILLIAM S. SINCLAIR  
City Manager

January 7, 1983

TO: James C. Gillette  
Robert L. Judd  
Robert A. Pierce  
Mary Jane Waldenmaier

Dear Board Members:

I am writing direct to you four Board members because you did meet with us and are well aware of just how much background we have on the matter of the school closings. Unfortunately, that background is compressed into what we gathered in the two hours spent on the subject.

The closing of schools has to be one of the hardest issues that faces any school board. It can be a very emotional issue and one where you seldom make friends, but often enemies. The Board certainly has to withdraw itself from the emotional aspects to make any sort of rational decision.

While it may shorten the time you have to agonize with the decision, certainly the second weakest approach is to be simply arbitrary in your decision. I fully expected at our meeting to be dazzled, if not confused, by an array of criteria and evaluations which led to a final conclusion on how the schools were selected. As you know, that was not the case. There were some general comments regarding the physical conditions at the various schools, but the conclusion was that they were all basically in good condition. It may well be that as Board members you have looked at a great many different factors and tried to evaluate all of these. As an outsider what appears to be a very limited analysis may not in fact be true.

It is a concern that I feel that those items that are not normal problems that School Boards face may not have been given consideration. From our discussion, it is obvious that we are concerned about how the closing will impact on the surrounding neighborhood. It appears on the surface that the School Board is abandoning the neighborhood school concept. Possibly the neighborhood school concept is not as significant in modern educational standards. If that is the case, someone should so indicate. It does seem though that it warrants some consideration. As you know, the City feels closing Washington is going to hamper our

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School Board Members  
January 7, 1983  
page 2

efforts to maintain older housing stock. The school administration feels that program is so much more important than the physical plant that it is not a significant problem. It does not seem that you resolve this issue by totally ignoring it.

Several of you mentioned that geometrics played a role in selection. It should be given consideration. On the other hand, we have been told that transportation costs are not a major factor. The present arrangement does not allow efficient use of the transportation facilities and the new arrangement does not mean more buses, but buses used more efficiently. I believe this is probably true. Assuming that it is true, it certainly reduces the importance of the geographical locations. Location should not be ignored, but at least given its proper prospective.

Is the ability to walk to and from school a major factor? There is no doubt that we attach more significance to it than you do, and it is reasonable to expect that you are better advised in this area. That does not mean that it should be completely discounted.

The question has come up about the disposition of the vacated schools. I do not feel that it is reasonable or possible for you to solve that problem. Some school buildings may never be adaptable for reuse. In considering school closing, you should at least give some consideration to both potential reuse as well as the impact on the community of no reuse being established.

Toward the end of our meeting, the point was made about the limited site available at Washington School. One has to recognize its limitations for 164 students, and I can not imagine the impact 400 students would have on the outdoor facilities. Certainly all the schools should be considered from the site standpoint. When you add site to neighborhood impact and the desirability of students being able to walk, you should maybe again consider Jefferson's feasibility. I am sure that it would be tantamount to opening a can of worms, but it is naive to think that question will not be raised.

Our meeting last Wednesday had far more positive aspects than negative. Its unfortunate that it came so late. The question of which party should have made the first contact is really academic and not worth belaboring. I believe all of the City representatives left the meeting with the firm belief that it is the desire of your Board and it's administration to present the best possible program within the financial constraints that exist. I would hope that you realize that our concerns are not just political reactions to the situation, but the belief that the closing of schools in the City do generate a greater community impact.

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School Board Members  
January 7, 1983  
page 3

At least the meeting gave you a trial run on the issue. Hopefully, the concerns we have expressed here will give you some idea of what to expect. We do feel that there are some issues that were not fully considered. That does not necessarily mean they were intentionally overlooked, but simply not realized. We ask that you do give them some consideration.

Sincerely yours,

CITY OF ST. JOSEPH

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill".

William S. Sinclair  
City Manager

bf

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**Appendix E**

**Questions and Answers Recorded at the January 6, 1983  
Meeting with the Superintendent and the  
PTO Representatives**

## Questions Asked Concerning School Closings

1. If safety is a factor, why is N. Lincoln so full and Brown and Clarke half full?
2. How many students will be in each class?
3. Will there be an art and music room in each building?
4. What about the Board promise not to close two city schools?
5. Will there be an increase because of the bussing?
6. Because there will be more bus stops, will there be more vandalism? Will we add busses?
7. Will there be bus pick up along Lincoln Avenue?
8. Will we receive more money because we are bussing more students?
9. Will we have to notify Benton Harbor as their letter asked?
10. After all our students are on busses, will we then fit into Southwestern Michigan plan of desegregation?
11. Is there a time line in the assignment of children and will parents have an opportunity to disagree?
12. Now that we are saving all this money, can we add or expand programs?
13. Will the moving of students take care of inequities that presently exist in the placement of students?
14. Is the sewer system at Clarke adequate?
15. Are sewer system parts obsolete and will they have to be specially made if necessary to replace them?
16. Why so little time to react? The recommendation was made on the third and voted on the tenth of January.
17. Will the playground equipment be moved?
18. Will the immediate property value around the closed schools suffer?
19. Brown and Washington were recommended for closing by the original task force. Why isn't this being used?

## **Appendix F**

### **Letter from the North Lincoln Parents Asking the Board Members Not to Close Their School**

January 7, 1983

Mrs. Joanne B. Averill, President  
3458 Valley View  
St. Joseph, MI 49085

Re: North Lincoln School Closing

The residents of the North Lincoln School District strongly oppose the apparent rapid schedule of the announcement of the closing of North Lincoln and then seven (7) days later ask for a vote on the issue.

Several questions have been raised, the least of which is why ignore the final recommendation of the Citizen's Advisory Task Force (1980).

We sincerely request specific answers to our questions (attached) and request the School Board to table the decision until there can be a public discussion of the pros and cons of the issue.

As our elected representatives, we feel it is only fair that we, the taxpayers have a right to be heard on this question which can have a devastating effect on the property values of the neighborhood. North Lincoln School has been in existence for over 30 years. To close it on one (1) week's notice is not truly fair to the people that have supported the school thru taxes and personnel involvement.

Respectfully yours,

Concerned Parents  
of North Lincoln

cc: Robert A Peirce  
Mary Jane Waldenmaier  
Dr. John L. Porritt  
Richard J. Dean  
James C. Gillette  
Robert L. Judd  
Dr. Fred A. Richardson

C O P Y

1. What would the specific savings be on closing North Lincoln over other schools?
2. If yearly maintenance had been maintained, isn't it a fact that North Lincoln would not be in such ill repair?
3. North Lincoln maintenance:
  - a. Roof replacement--What was the actual estimate on costs? Could it be repaired instead of replaced?
  - b. Flooring--What was the estimated cost for repairing or replacing?
  - c. Boiler and mechanical systems--What was the estimated cost for repairs? How are boiler and mechanical systems in other elementary schools?
  - d. Drain tiles--Are the broken drain tiles county or road drains? In which case, repairs could come from drainage district at large, rather than 100% from school budget.
  - e. Utilities--What is the comparison of actual cost with other elementary schools?
  - f. Safety hazards--We have quicker snowplowing; faster response for emergency vehicles; i.e., police, fire and ambulance.

Have professional estimates even been sought?
4. What would it cost to bring North Lincoln up to present day building codes?
5. North Lincoln is one of the fullest schools in the district. The Gym is also rented out or in use for school functions almost every night. These conditions would naturally make our utilities higher. Once the less occupied schools, who also have lower utility bills, are filled to capacity; the usage of the utilities would also increase. Have you taken these increases in utilities usage into consideration when making your decision?
6. What will happen to the building? If it is closed and out of use for a year or more could it be reopened for school use?
7. What is the cost of transportation per student in each school?
8. What is the number of students that live within  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile? 1 mile? of each elementary school?
9. What is the actual cost for bussing at all elementary schools?



10. What is the longest possible time a child would be riding on a bus?
11. If consolidation of bus routes is being considered now, why hasn't this been considered previously in order to save money?
12. Glenlord Road is often, very often hazardous for travel during the winter months. Hollywood and Maiden Lane are often closed even though drift fences are used. How can you possibly reassure us as parents that these conditions will not endanger the physical safety of our children?
13. Train derailments have become a common occurrence in recent years, many causing evacuations of surrounding properties. How would evacuation of Brown School students take place upon the blockage of Brown School Road?
14. Sewage Treatment Plant and Water at E. P. Clarke:
  - a. Is the problem continuous?
  - b. What about the repairs on the obsolete system? How easily can they be made?
  - c. What if a new sewer and water system is needed? Where will the funds come from to fix or install a new system?
15. Has there been an appraisal of market value for each individual elementary school?
16. What has been the student growth rate at E. P. Clarke?
17. Does the fact that the building bonds on Clarke and Brown are unpaid, influence the decision of the School Board?
18. Percentage wise, how many students can be absorbed by Clarke? By Brown? By Lincoln?
19. If the financial situation of the school system is calling for cutbacks, why haven't we seen cutbacks in the administrators and their secretarial staffs?
20. With cutbacks in the teaching staff, what guarantee do we have that the quality of education our children receive will remain at the good standards it is at now?
21. We have been informed that class size will be at capacity, meaning 25 students in lower elementary rooms and 28 in upper elementary rooms. What guarantee do we have that overcrowding will not occur?

22. Why are the school closings being rushed through in one week?
23. Summer Tax--What would be the net savings?
24. The Task Force Report (1980) recommended the closing of Brown and Washington Schools. What has changed since then?
25. Schools that have major student population surrounding them are under consideration for closing. It would seem less disruptive if sparsely student populated areas would be bussed in to the major areas. Please Reply.
26. Are there studies showing that the environment of the other elementary schools has actually improved the scholastic achievement of their students?

## **Appendix G**

**Two Documents Produced by the Superintendent  
Giving Rationale for Closing Washington  
and North Lincoln Schools**

Rationale for Transferring Students from Washington  
and North Lincoln Schools Beginning with  
1983/84 School Year

Washington

1. Mechanical system is in need of updating.
2. Excessive cost to bring in line with Section 504 (handicap) regulations.
3. Restricted parking facilities.
4. Located in high traffic area, resulting in safety hazards.
5. Has small and paved playground.
6. The gymnasium is located above the art room with resultant noise.
7. Classrooms are on four levels, thus each child attends classes on at least three levels, some on four levels.
8. Kitchen is very small.
9. Students residing north of the river and west of the bluff are already bussed to school.

North Lincoln

1. School needs roof replacement.
2. Flooring repairs are needed.
3. Needs updating of boiler and mechanical systems.
4. Window areas are excessive and result in loss of heat.
5. Drain tiles across front of lot leading to major parking area need repairs.
6. Kitchen equipment less adequate than in other school buildings.
7. Utilities--gas, electricity, water--are the most costly.
8. Located in high traffic area, resulting in safety hazards.

### Transportation

1. Bus stops in a closed Washington building area will be closer to 90% of the students' homes than the school is to their home.

2. North Lincoln is geographically situated so the dispersment of students to other schools would be more contiguous to remaining elementary schools.

3. North Lincoln students could be absorbed into Clarke, whereas all Clarke students could not be transferred to North Lincoln.

### Summary

We propose to keep open our two largest elementary schools--Lincoln and Clarke. Thus, each unit of government will have at least one educational facility located within its boundaries:

City--two schools: Lincoln and Senior High School

Lincoln Township: Upton Junior High School

Royalton Township: E. P. Clarke Elementary School

St. Joseph Township: Brown Elementary School

This leads to equitable facility distribution throughout the entire public school district.

Rationale for Closings of Washington  
and North Lincoln

1. We propose keeping open our two largest elementary schools: Lincoln and Clarke.
2. North Lincoln, Brown, and Washington are the same size--two are proposed to be closed.
3. North Lincoln and Washington have the highest traffic areas, therefore, the least safe.
4. Brown has the most ideal learning environment:
  - a. Quietest.
  - b. Most secluded.
  - c. Playground most pleasing and safest.
  - d. Hallways the best lighted and brightest.
  - e. All on one story--no stairs.
  - f. Best hallway traffic pattern for safety and supervision.
  - g. Newest.
  - h. Largest and most preferred specialist rooms.
5. Washington has the smallest playground and it is paved.
6. Washington has the smallest parking lot, not enough space for all the teachers' cars, let alone visitors.
7. Washington has its gym above the art room making a lot of noise and distraction for the students in art.
8. Washington's classrooms are on four levels making every child attend classes on at least three levels, some on four levels.
9. Washington has the highest potential fire hazard because of the stair wells and the all-wood floors, stairs, and decorative trim.
10. Washington has more busy streets to cross.
11. Washington students north of the river and west of the bluff are already bussed.

12. Bus stops in a closed Washington building area will be closer to 90% of the students' homes than the school is to their home.

13. North Lincoln is geographically situated so the dispersment of students to other schools would be more contiguous to remaining elementary schools.

14. North Lincoln students could be absorbed into Clarke whereas all Clarke students could not be transferred to North Lincoln.

## **Appendix H**

**Questions from Parents and Answers Discussed  
at the January 10, 1983 School  
Board Meeting**



## ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 7, 1983

TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION

FROM: DR. FRED A. RICHARDSON

SUBJECT: QUESTIONS MOST OFTEN ASKED AND ANSWERS

INSTRUCTIONAL

## 1. NOW THAT WE ARE SAVING ALL THIS MONEY, CAN WE ADD OR EXPAND PROGRAMS?

THE MONEY TO BE SAVED AS A RESULT OF NOT ASSIGNING STUDENTS TO WASHINGTON OR NORTH LINCOLN IS TO AVOID A DEFICIT BUDGET ESTIMATED AT \$450,000. THEREFORE, THERE ARE NO PLANS FOR EXPANSION OF PROGRAMS BUT TO MAINTAIN THE EXCELLENT PROGRAMS WE CURRENTLY HAVE.

## 2. WILL THERE BE ART AND MUSIC ROOMS IN EACH BUILDING?

THERE WILL BE ROOMS AVAILABLE TO HAVE EACH OF THE PROGRAMS. THERE WILL BE A SPECIAL ROOM AT CLARKE AND LINCOLN AVAILABLE, BUT THERE IS A QUESTION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THERE WILL BE A ROOM AVAILABLE SPECIFICALLY FOR ART AND MUSIC AT BROWN. HOWEVER, IT IS OUR BELIEF THAT, AFTER THE SECOND YEAR OF STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS, AN ART AND MUSIC ROOM WILL BE AVAILABLE AT BROWN.

GENERAL

## 1. IS THERE A TIME LINE IN THE ASSIGNMENT OF CHILDREN AND WILL PARENTS HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISAGREE?

AT THIS TIME NO PLAN HAS BEEN DEVELOPED FOR THE ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS. WE WILL ATTEMPT TO BE THE LEAST POSSIBLE DISRUPTIVE, AND PTO REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS AREA. WE HAVE DISCUSSED A VARIETY OF ALTERNATIVES, BUT IT MUST BE CLEARLY KNOWN THAT NO STUDENT ASSIGNMENT PROGRAM HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. WE HAVE COMPUTER PRINTOUT DATA THAT ILLUSTRATES WE HAVE SEVERAL OPTIONS. IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT THAT DURING THE PREVIOUS SCHOOL CLOSING, THE BOARD POLICY DEALING WITH STUDENT ASSIGNMENT ON A LAST IN, FIRST OUT, BASIS WAS SUSPENDED. STUDENTS BEING REASSIGNED FROM NORTH LINCOLN AND WASHINGTON SCHOOLS WILL BE PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY AT THE END OF THIS SCHOOL YEAR TO ATTEND ONE DAY OF CLASSES AT THE SCHOOL TO WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED FOR THE 83-84 SCHOOL YEAR. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE PARENTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO REACT TO STUDENT ASSIGNMENT, AS HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE CASE.

## 2. WILL THE MOVING OF STUDENTS TAKE CARE OF INEQUITIES THAT PRESENTLY EXIST IN THE PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS?

EVERY ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO MINIMIZE ANY INEQUITY IN STUDENT PLACEMENTS, GEOGRAPHICALLY OR BY CLASS SIZE.

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3. WHY SO LITTLE TIME TO REACT? THE RECOMMENDATION WAS MADE ON THE THIRD AND VOTED ON ON THE TENTH OF JANUARY? -

REASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS HAS BEEN A TOPIC OF DISCUSSION SINCE THE BOARD ESTABLISHED ITS GOALS FOR THE DISTRICT AND ESTABLISHED THE OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR IN JUNE 1982. ALSO, THIS TOPIC HAS BEEN UNDER CONSIDERATION SINCE THE ORIGINAL TASK FORCE WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1979, AND, MORE SPECIFICALLY, IT HAS BEEN DEALT WITH BY REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE ADMINISTRATION, THE BOARD AND PTO REPRESENTATIVES SINCE OCTOBER OF THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR.

4. BROWN AND WASHINGTON WERE RECOMMENDED FOR CLOSING BY THE ORIGINAL TASK FORCE. WHY ISN'T THIS BEING USED?

A PORTION OF THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE ORIGINAL TASK FORCE IS BEING USED, PARTICULARLY AS IT RELATES TO THE REASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS FROM WASHINGTON SCHOOL. OUR CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES AND DATA DO NOT LEAD TO THE RECOMMENDATION TO CLOSE BROWN IN LIGHT OF REASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS OF THE REPORT PLUS OTHER DATA. THE MAJORITY AND MINORITY REPORTS AT THAT TIME REFLECTED THE THINKING OF LAY PEOPLE WITHIN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND DID NOT, NECESSARILY, REFLECT THE THINKING OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

5. WHAT ABOUT THE BOARD'S PROMISE NOT TO CLOSE TWO CITY SCHOOLS?

AFTER A THOROUGH REVIEW OF THE INFORMATION RELATED TO PREVIOUS SCHOOL CLOSING, NO DATA HAS BEEN DISCOVERED TO VALIDATE THAT THE BOARD MADE ANY PROMISE NOT TO CLOSE TWO CITY SCHOOLS.

6. WILL THE IMMEDIATE PROPERTY VALUE AROUND THE CLOSED SCHOOLS SUFFER?

IT IS OUR OPINION THAT THE PROPERTY VALUES WILL NOT SUFFER. THE THIRD COMPONENT OF THE RECOMMENDATION IS TO ENSURE AGAINST THAT POSSIBILITY, AS IT PROVIDES FOR LONG-RANGE PLANNING TO ENSURE THAT BUILDING USE WILL BE TO BENEFIT THE IMMEDIATE CITY/TOWNSHIP SURROUNDING AREAS AS WELL AS THE ENTIRE SCHOOL DISTRICT.

#### FACILITIES

1. IS THE SEWER SYSTEM AT CLARKE ADEQUATE?

YES, IT IS ADEQUATE. IT IS FUNCTIONING PROPERLY, AND WE HAVE EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT IT WILL FUNCTION EVEN BETTER AS MORE STUDENTS MAKE USE OF THE FACILITIES. TRADITIONALLY, WE HAVE HAD MORE TROUBLE WITH THE FACILITIES DURING THE SUMMER WHEN NO STUDENTS ARE PRESENT. IT IS OPERATED AND REGULATED UNDER A PERMIT ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, STATE OF MICHIGAN. THE FACILITIES HAVE NEVER BEEN IN NEED OF ANYTHING MORE THAN ROUTINE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR. IT HAS ALWAYS FUNCTIONED ADEQUATELY AND PROPERLY, EVEN WHEN THE BUILDING WAS AT MAXIMUM CAPACITY.

2. ARE SEWER SYSTEM PARTS OBSOLETE AND WILL THEY HAVE TO BE SPECIALLY MADE IF NECESSARY TO REPLACE THEM?

THE EQUIPMENT DOES REQUIRE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR FROM TIME TO TIME AND, IN SOME CASES, MODERNIZATION HAS OCCURRED.

3. WILL THE PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT BE MOVED?

AS WE REVIEW THE FUTURE USE OF THE FACILITIES AND IF IT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT TO RELOCATE PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT, IT WILL BE THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT TO DO THAT, JUST AS WE WOULD RELOCATE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT.

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TRANSPORTATION

1. IF SAFETY IS A FACTOR, WHY IS NORTH LINCOLN SO FULL AND BROWN AND CLARKE HALF FULL?

HAD APPROPRIATE REASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS OCCURRED ANNUALLY, THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BUILDINGS AS PRESENTLY VIEWED WOULD NOT EXIST TODAY.

2. WILL THERE BE AN INCREASE BECAUSE OF THE BUSSING?

THERE WILL BE AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS BEING BUSSED, BUT THERE WILL BE AN OVERALL DECREASE IN THE NUMBER OF BUSES USED, BECAUSE IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO DEVELOP MORE EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION PATTERNS.

3. BECAUSE THERE WILL BE MORE BUS STOPS, WILL THERE BE MORE VANDALISM? WILL WE ADD BUSES?

IT IS OUR BELIEF THAT THERE WILL BE NO MORE VANDALISM THAN WHAT WE CURRENTLY HAVE. THERE WILL BE MORE BUS STOPS, BUT WE WILL NOT NEED TO ADD MORE BUSES, AS STATED IN THE PREVIOUS ANSWER.

4. WILL THERE BE BUS PICK-UP ALONG LINCOLN AVENUE?

SPECIFIC BUS ROUTES HAVE NOT BEEN ESTABLISHED, BECAUSE ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS HAS NOT BEEN DECIDED. HOWEVER, BUS STOPS WILL BE LOCATED TO PROVIDE THE BEST ACCESS AND THE MOST SAFETY FOR ALL STUDENTS.

5. WILL WE RECEIVE MORE MONEY BECAUSE WE ARE BUSSING MORE STUDENTS?

NO. THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IS AN OUT-OF-FORMULA SCHOOL DISTRICT AND OUR CATEGORICAL FUNDING, WHICH INCLUDES TRANSPORTATION REVENUE, HAS BEEN PROJECTED AT ZERO AND WILL NOT IN THE FUTURE BE CHANGED, UNLESS THERE IS A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE STATE AID ACT.

GENERAL

THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE POSITIVE REASONS FOR RECOMMENDING CONTINUED USE OF CLARKE, BROWN AND LINCOLN:

LINCOLN AND CLARKE ARE OUR TWO LARGEST SCHOOLS AND, THEREFORE, WE WILL BE KEEPING THEM OPEN. ALL THREE ARE IN THE MOST SECLUDED AND QUIET AREA, AND ALL THREE HAVE THE MOST PLEASANT AND SAFE PLAYGROUNDS. ALSO, BROWN AND CLARKE ARE OUR NEWEST FACILITIES.

IN SUMMARY, CLARKE AND LINCOLN ARE THE TWO LARGEST REMAINING ELEMENTARY BUILDINGS AND BROWN IS THE NEWEST OF THE OTHER THREE SCHOOLS - NORTH LINCOLN, WASHINGTON AND BROWN.

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**Appendix I**

**Correspondence Between a North Lincoln Parent  
and the Superintendent**

January 13, 1983

TO: Dr. Fred Richardson, Superintendent of Schools  
and/or  
St. Joseph School Board

FROM: North Lincoln School Parents

The following are some questions from some of the North Lincoln parents.

- I. Is the specific information and facts used in determining which schools should be closed, available for inspection? Are the minutes or written records of meetings in which administrators determined which schools will be closed also available? (They should fall under the Freedom of Information act)
- II. What will happen to items bought by the North Lincoln P.T.O. for North Lincoln students? Can we have assurance that these items (i.e. the North Lincoln computer, playground equipment and athletic equipment bought with PTO funds) be sent to the same school as the bulk of North Lincoln students?
- III. Will there be a parent advisory committee chosen from North Lincoln Parents to help in determining the new student school assignments, and/or the new district boundaries? Will there also be parents on the committee of officials to determine future building uses? What is plan for parent advice on the transportation (bussing) plan?
- IV. What is the present discussion of administration and the board in regards to future closings if any elementary schools and/or the Upon Junior High School?
- V. What is the status of discussion regarding the movement of sixth grade students to Upon Junior High.
- VI. Why was there no polling or referendum of the whole district regarding the possibilities of a millage being passed?

KB:mc  
1-13-83

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The following are concerns of the North Lincoln parents which we would like you to be aware of.

- I. Almost all of the parents are very disturbed with the apparent lack of sincere interest of some board members during the Monday night meeting. As you know, a lot of heart and emotion went into this issue and the parents felt that as an elected body, all members should have at least showed a bit of concern during the meeting.
- II. If our children should end up at E.P. Clarke we would like major consideration to have Dave Ratajik remain principle of our students due to the fact that he is so familiar with many of the parents and all of the children. We feel this would help greatly in the transition of students to a new atmosphere. (We understand his position as low seniority and the possibilities of losing a principle unless Mr. Hoffman retires.)

Thank you,

KEN BATES, and North Lincoln Parents

KB:mc  
1-13-83

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# St. Joseph Public Schools

2214 SOUTH STATE STREET • ST. JOSEPH, MICHIGAN 49085

FRED A. RICHARDSON, ED. D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
Phone (616) 983-3978

FEBRUARY 1, 1983

MR. KENNETH BATES  
& NORTH LINCOLN SCHOOL PARENTS

DEAR PARENTS:

IN REPLY TO YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 13, 1983, FOLLOWING ARE THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS SUBMITTED, AND I HAVE TRIED TO BE AS BRIEF AND AS SPECIFIC AS POSSIBLE:

- I. IS THE SPECIFIC INFORMATION AND FACTS USED IN DETERMINING WHICH SCHOOLS SHOULD BE CLOSED AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION? ARE THE MINUTES OR WRITTEN RECORDS OF MEETINGS IN WHICH ADMINISTRATORS DETERMINED WHICH SCHOOLS WILL BE CLOSED ALSO AVAILABLE? (THEY SHOULD FALL UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.)
- A. ANY INFORMATION CONTAINED IN OUR RECORDS RELATED TO THE CLOSING OF ANY OF OUR SCHOOLS IS AVAILABLE AND OPEN TO INSPECTION BY ANY GROUP. THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT INSURES THAT OUR RECORDS REMAIN OPEN, AND WE WELCOME ANYONE WHO HAS AN INTEREST TO INSPECT THEM.
- II. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ITEMS BOUGHT BY THE NORTH LINCOLN P.T.O. FOR NORTH LINCOLN STUDENTS? CAN WE HAVE ASSURANCE THAT THESE ITEMS (I.E. THE NORTH LINCOLN COMPUTER, PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT AND ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT BOUGHT WITH PTO FUNDS) BE SENT TO THE SAME SCHOOL AS THE BULK OF NORTH LINCOLN STUDENTS?
- A. WE WILL MAKE EVERY ATTEMPT TO SEE TO IT THAT THE NORTH LINCOLN STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM ANY OF THE EQUIPMENT PURCHASED BY THE NORTH LINCOLN PTO. IT WOULD APPEAR TO ME THAT THE PEOPLE WHO COULD HELP BEST TO DISTRIBUTE THOSE PIECES OF EQUIPMENT WOULD BE THE NORTH LINCOLN PTO REPRESENTATIVES. I WOULD BE HAPPY TO WORK WITH THE PTO OFFICERS IN AN EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF THE EQUIPMENT.
- III. WILL THERE BE A PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHOSEN FROM NORTH LINCOLN PARENTS TO HELP IN DETERMINING THE NEW STUDENT SCHOOL ASSIGNMENTS, AND/OR THE NEW DISTRICT BOUNDARIES? WILL THERE ALSO BE PARENTS ON THE COMMITTEE OF OFFICIALS TO DETERMINE FUTURE BUILDING USES? WHAT IS PLAN FOR PARENT ADVICE ON THE TRANSPORTATION (BUSSING) PLAN?
- A. PTO REPRESENTATIVES FROM NORTH LINCOLN ARE ASSISTING AND GIVING INPUT ON STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE THREE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. WE WILL ALSO WELCOME PARENT PARTICIPATION ON THE FUTURE BUILDING USE COMMITTEE, AND WE WILL WELCOME ADVICE ON THE TRANSPORTATION PLAN THAT WILL NEED TO BE DEVELOPED AFTER STUDENTS ARE ASSIGNED TO THE NEW BUILDINGS.

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2.

I. WHAT IS THE PRESENT DISCUSSION OF ADMINISTRATION AND THE BOARD IN REGARDS TO FUTURE CLOSINGS OF ANY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS AND/OR THE UPTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL?

A. THERE IS CURRENTLY NO DISCUSSION ABOUT ADDITIONAL FUTURE CLOSINGS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OR UPTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL. I SIMPLY HAD INDICATED THAT IN THE FUTURE THERE MAY BE A NEED, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR OUR STUDENT ENROLLMENT DECLINE. BUT AT THIS TIME I DO NOT SEE THE NEED TO CLOSE A BUILDING IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, AS I HAD INDICATED BEFORE. HOWEVER, THERE CAN BE NO COMMITMENT MADE THAT WE WILL NOT CLOSE ANOTHER SCHOOL SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE.

V. WHAT IS THE STATUS OF DISCUSSION REGARDING THE MOVEMENT OF SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS TO UPTON JUNIOR HIGH?

A. THERE ARE CURRENTLY NO PLANS TO MOVE SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS TO UPTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL. THE ONLY WAY IN WHICH THAT WILL BECOME A TOPIC TO BE DEALT WITH IS IF THERE IS SUFFICIENT PARENT INTEREST TO CAUSE US TO DISCUSS IT AGAIN.

VI. WHY WAS THERE NO POLLING OR REFERENDUM OF THE WHOLE DISTRICT REGARDING THE POSSIBILITIES OF A MILLAGE BEING PASSED?

A. IT WAS THE OPINION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION THAT A MILLAGE INCREASE AT THIS TIME WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE PASSED. IN ADDITION, THE EXPENSE AND TIME DELAY OF HOLDING AN ELECTION DID NOT SEEM TO BE A REASONABLE ALTERNATIVE TO MOVING AHEAD AND PLANNING THE FUTURE USE OF THE BUILDINGS. IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO JUSTIFY CONTINUING TO OPERATE HALF-FULL BUILDINGS, EVEN IF THE MONEY WERE AVAILABLE. IT IS MY BELIEF THAT THE ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL DISTRICT HAS BEEN COMMITTED TO AN EXCELLENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND WOULD CHOOSE TO SPEND ITS MONEY IN THIS AREA RATHER THAN TO OPERATE HALF-FULL BUILDINGS.

IN SUMMARY, IF THERE ARE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ME ADDRESS, I WOULD BE HAPPY TO DO THAT. IF THE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS ARE NOT AS COMPLETE AS YOU WOULD LIKE, FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ME.

I MUST APOLOGIZE FOR THE DELAY IN RESPONSE TO YOUR QUESTIONS. I HAD INTENDED TO REPLY TO YOUR LETTER THE DAY I RECEIVED IT.

SINCERELY,



FRED A. RICHARDSON, ED.D.

FAR/P

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## **Appendix J**

### **Questions Raised by PTO Representatives**

Questions Raised by PTO Representatives  
at Meeting on January 13, 1983

1. Can principal stay with buildings where half of students go?
  2. Move kindergarten round-up to earlier date and try to assign kindergarten where rest of family is assigned.
  3. Possibly give priority to kindergarten student who already has family in that school.
  4. Will LIFO be used or not?
  5. Prefer to reboundary the district rather than shift en masse.
  6. Suggest enlarge school areas now to return to "neighborhoods"--would help if further school closing is necessary.
- Fred--sounds like they would like to see a total redistricting model.
- (Positive response)--"Main" district model  
--Then go out as necessary to "equalize"
7. How will teachers be reassigned?
  8. Do not prefer 6th graders to go to Upton.
  9. Probably would not have an identity with the elementary levels or the Junior High, if a few classrooms were placed in the Junior High as self-contained units.
  10. Is there a possibility of three 6th grades in one school? 2nd grade?
  11. Do you follow the one-mile limit for bus stops?

## **Appendix K**

### **Board Policy 5020: The Assignment of Students to Elementary Schools**

### Assignment of Students to Elementary Schools

1. The Board of Education is legally responsible for the assignment of students to the various schools. Students ordinarily will be assigned to the school nearest their homes.

2. No students will be assigned to the Jefferson Elementary School after the 1979/80 School Year.

3. A plan for reassignment of elementary school students, as it becomes necessary to do so in order to achieve ratios of students to teachers mentioned below, will be developed under the direction of the Superintendent and implemented for the 1980/81 School Year.

4. The ratio of students to classroom teachers in any school building shall be no greater than twenty-eight to one (28:1). In grades Kindergarten, one, two, and three the district-wide ratio of students to teachers at any grade level shall not exceed twenty-five to one (25:1). In grades four, five, and six this ratio shall not exceed twenty-eight to one (28:1). Whenever this ratio does exceed the 25:1 ratio by thirteen students, or the 28:1 ratio by fifteen students, a new section at that grade level will be established. Adjustments to student assignments may be made annually, as they become necessary, to ensure these ratios.

5. Such adjustments shall be made annually before the opening of school, based upon most recent information. Further adjustments may be made on or before the sixth (6th) day of school for students each year, if actual enrollments necessitate this action. Parents will be advised of opportunities to request transfer of their children in advance of any mandatory transfers at any grade level.

6. If mandatory transfers become necessary after the reassignment plan directed in paragraph 3, above, has been implemented, they will be made according to the following guidelines:

a) All parents of students in the affected classroom will be notified of the problem, and opportunities to request transfers will be offered.

b) Students will be selected for transfer in the order of latest enrollment date, regardless of location of residence (last in--first out). Exceptions may be made for children with handicaps.

7. Students may be assigned to a school other than the nearest, if necessary, to meet the standard outlined in 4 above. Such students may be assigned to the nearest school at the start of the

following school year, if class size permits the transfer and if the parent agrees to it. If the parent declines the transfer, he shall be responsible for the transportation of the student, unless school bus service is available at no additional cost to the district.

8. A parent may request that his child be transferred to any school where the class size at the child's grade level is lower than that of the school to which he has been assigned. Such request must be made to the Superintendent on or before the sixth (6th) day of school. If the request is granted, the parent shall be responsible for the transportation of the student, unless school bus service is available at no additional cost to the district. This student shall remain in the new assignment at the discretion of the Superintendent.

9. If a family moves within the district, the children may be reassigned to the school closest to the new residence or may remain in their original assignments at the discretion of the Superintendent.

10. If it is necessary to assign a Kindergarten child to a school other than that to which other children in his family have been assigned, parents will be given the opportunity to request transfer of the others to that school.

13June77 (R) 9June80 (R) 10Nov80 (L)

C O P Y

## **Appendix L**

### **Tentative Plans for Reassigning Students**

Tentative  
Plan "A"

Lincoln:

Includes everything East of Niles (including East side of Niles) and North of Winchester.

Brown:

Includes everything West of Niles and Washington and South of Winchester to Southern boundary (Wilson Road).

Clarke:

Includes everything East of Washington and South of Lydia to river and South to Southern border.

\*There were slight adjustments made to balance class size.

Tentative  
Plan "A"

	<u>K</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
Brown	?	53	54	54	52	57	55
Clarke	?	53	53	54	53	58	81
Lincoln	?	<u>53</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>55</u>
		159	161	162	156	172	191

Children in new school.

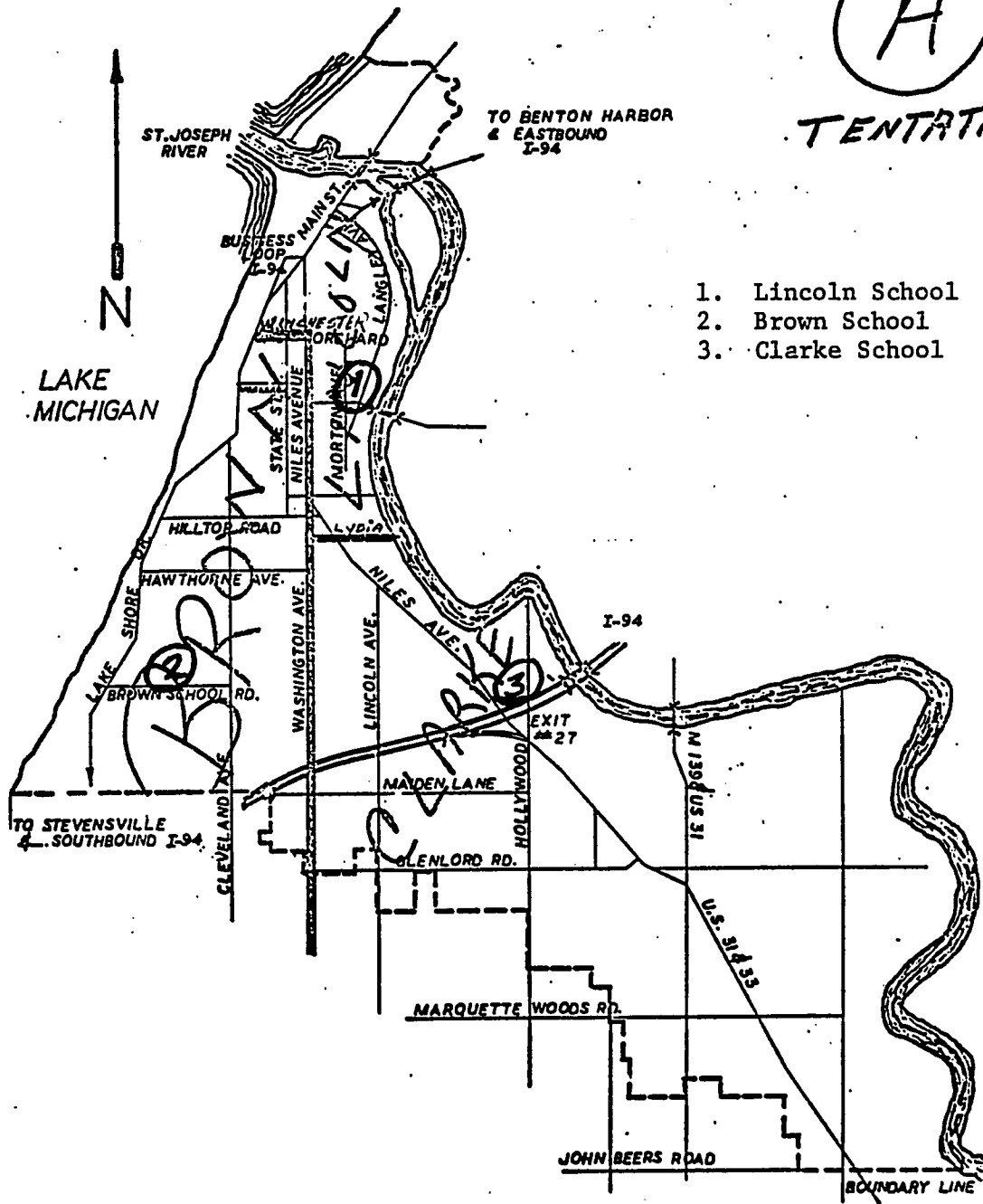
	<u>K</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>Total</u>
Brown	-	1	1	0	2	2	1	7
Clarke	-	2	2	1	1	2	0	8
Lincoln	-	28	24	19	26	34	24	155
N. Lincoln	-	27	28	40	25	27	54	201
Washington	-	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>160</u>
		85	83	84	80	95	104	531



# ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL DISTRICT

A

TENTATIVE



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Tentative  
Plan "B"

Lincoln:

Includes everything East of Main and Red Arrow Highway and North of Hilltop.

Brown:

Includes everything West of Main and everything along both sides of Red Arrow Highway to Southern border.

Also, everything from Hilltop and Washington, South to Southern end of border.

Clarke:

Includes everything East of Washington and South of Lydia to river and South to Southern border.

\*There were slight adjustments made to balance class size.

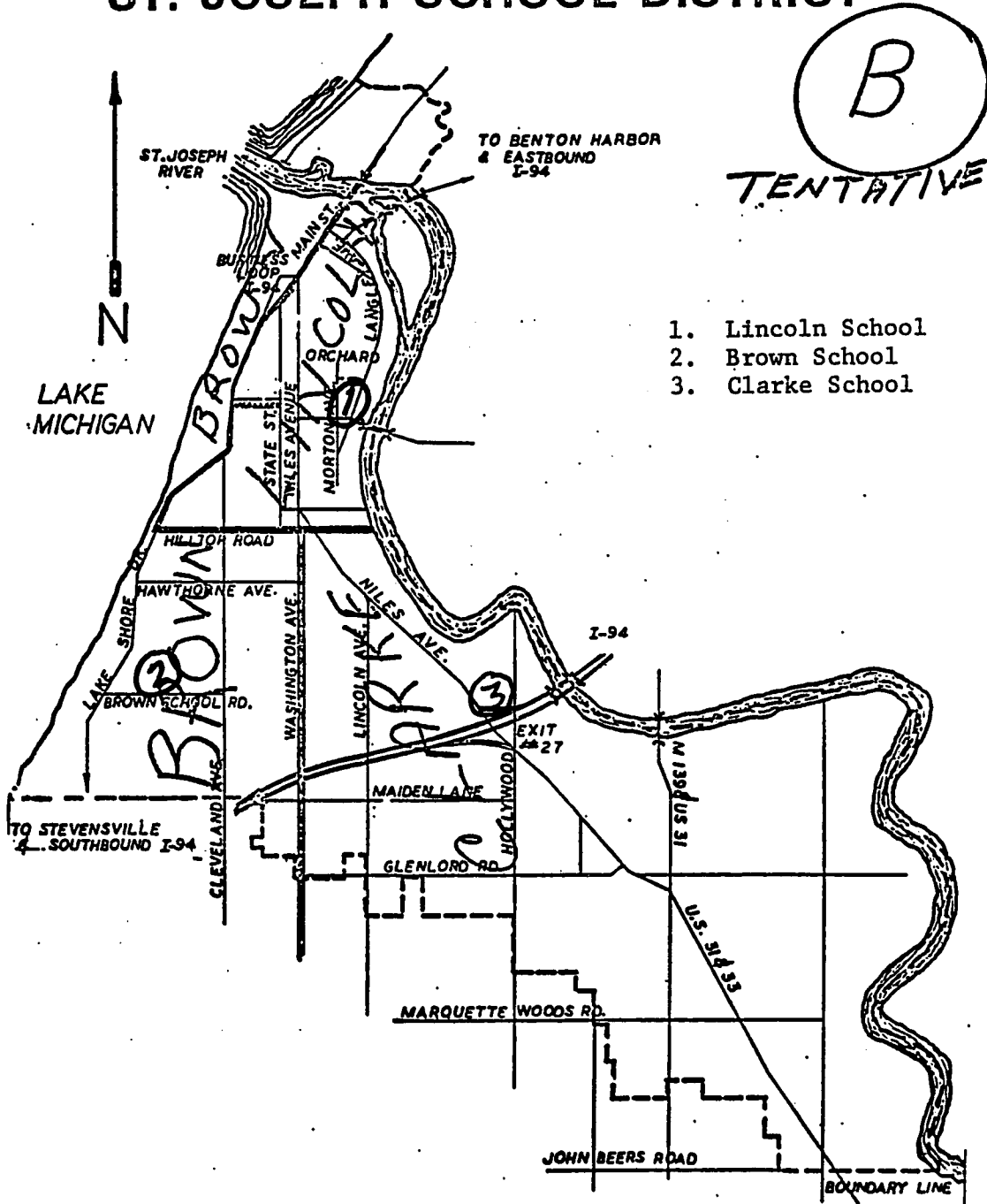
Tentative  
Plan "B"

	<u>K</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
Brown	-	52	54	53	51	57	55
Clarke	-	54	55	56	53	58	81
Lincoln	-	<u>53</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>55</u>
		159	161	162	156	172	191

Children in new school.

	<u>K</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>Total</u>
Brown	-	0	1	0	1	4	1	7
Clarke	-	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Lincoln	-	17	18	10	12	16	20	93
N. Lincoln	-	27	28	40	25	27	54	201
Washington	-	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>160</u>
		71	75	74	65	77	100	462

# ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL DISTRICT



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**Appendix M**

**Plans M and O for Reassigning Students  
(Presented by Two PTO Presidents)**

## Plan "M"

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
Brown	57	55	55	48	67	44
Lincoln	51 (8)	58 (18)	52 (6)	55 (10)	48 (4)	56 (5)

( ) Swing Area

## Children in new school.

Brown	7
Clarke	8
Lincoln	75
N. Lincoln	201
Washington	<u>160</u>
	451

## Plan "M"

In June 1981, the St. Joseph School Board voted to close Jefferson School to elementary students and reassign students on the basis of minimal disruption. The impression was that this was a permanent move for the Jefferson area populace. Since two schools could have been closed that year and another was predicted in 1984 or 1985, it was obvious that other closings were soon to follow.

A group of resigned families moved into Lincoln. A few felt that a common project would meld the population into one. The idea of the playground project was conceived and adopted by the PTO. Our children asked neighbors to save newspapers for paper drives, we had dinners, bake sales, country store sales and carnivals, all to raise money to improve our playground. Everyone (children, parents, teachers, and principal) was involved in improving their school. The PTO had almost 50% participation last year! This effort was very successful as reported to the board. We installed over \$5,000 worth of equipment (involving over \$2,000 in installation time and labor donated by parents.) This was a very positive experience for all. The Lincoln children and parents have adjusted well to their new school. A very positive educational environment now exists at Lincoln. Is it in the best interest of these children who have been disrupted to be disrupted again.

A few weeks ago the PTO representatives' consensus was that re-districting was desirable. A form of redistricting South of Hilltop is easily accomplished and presents minimal disruption. The city, because of the density and distribution of children, is a completely different situation.

Under plans A, B, and O, three schools are totally disrupted. Only two need be. Lincoln has already been involved in a closing. When a school's population is doubled, it experiences "growing pains"--children adjusting to other children, new teachers, new situations, bus routes, etc.

Perhaps the following plan is the least disruptive.

1. Move the current Washington children who can walk safely to Lincoln.
2. Move or return the children South of Hilltop to Clarke (with their North Lincoln friends) or Brown.
3. Move the bused Washington children to Brown school.
4. Use the descriptions for Brown and Clarke areas as included in Plan A or B.

This follows consistently the pattern at the time of the Jefferson School closing. Not all Jefferson children moved to Lincoln. Some Jefferson and Lincoln area children moved to Washington. Now these children probably will return to Lincoln.

The minimally disruptive plan used at the time of the Jefferson closing can be used as a model for the current student assignments. If a builder constructs a model home with lots of "pluses" that is admired, the builder would not take the bricks from it to build another home. He would follow the same plan--so can the St. Joseph School District.

C O P Y



## Plan "O"

	<u>K</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>Total</u>
	X	5	9	3	5	8	2	32
Lincoln	Y	59	63	53	56	52	62	345
	Z	52	61	47	53	48	55	316
	Y	43	46	53	47	63	48	300
Brown	Z	50	48	59	50	67	55	329
Clarke		<u>56</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>357</u>
		158	163	160	156	173	192	1,002

Y - Lake Blvd. - Red Arrow - Cleveland

Z - Lake Blvd. - Lakeview

X - # of students on and between Lake Blvd. and Main Street

## Children in new school.

	<u>K</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>Total</u>
Brown	-	0	1	0	1	4	1	7
Clarke	-	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Lincoln Y		13	14	9	13	28	16	93
	Z	20	16	10	16	32	22	116
N. Lincoln		27	28	40	25	27	54	201
Washington		27	28	24	26	30	25	<u>160</u>
							(Y)	462
							(Z)	485

## Plan "O"

## Lincoln:

East of RR tracks  
So. of the River  
St. Joe Drive and North  
East Side of Cleveland

## Brown

Take Ridgeway to Brown  
Take Lyons Pk. to Brown (West of tracks)  
West of Red Arrow at Main to Brown  
Extends down West side of Cleveland to Hilltop

## Clarke

Includes everything East of Washington and South of St. Joe  
Drive (all streets off of), city limits and South to the  
Southern Border.

## **Appendix N**

### **Final Plan for Reassigning Students**

## Boundary Descriptions

\*Brown

Everything north of Market Street and north of the river.

Everything below (west of) the bluff.

Everything on and west of Red Arrow Highway from Lake Blvd. to Cleveland Avenue.

Everything on and west of Cleveland Avenue to Hilltop Road.

Everything south of Hilltop Road and on and west of Washington Ave.

\*Lincoln

Everything south of Market Street.

Everything on and east of Lake Blvd.

Everything east of Red Arrow Highway from Lake Blvd. to Cleveland Avenue.

Everything east of Cleveland Avenue to Hilltop Road.

Everything north of Hilltop Road.

\*Clarke

Everything east of Washington Avenue and south of the city limits.

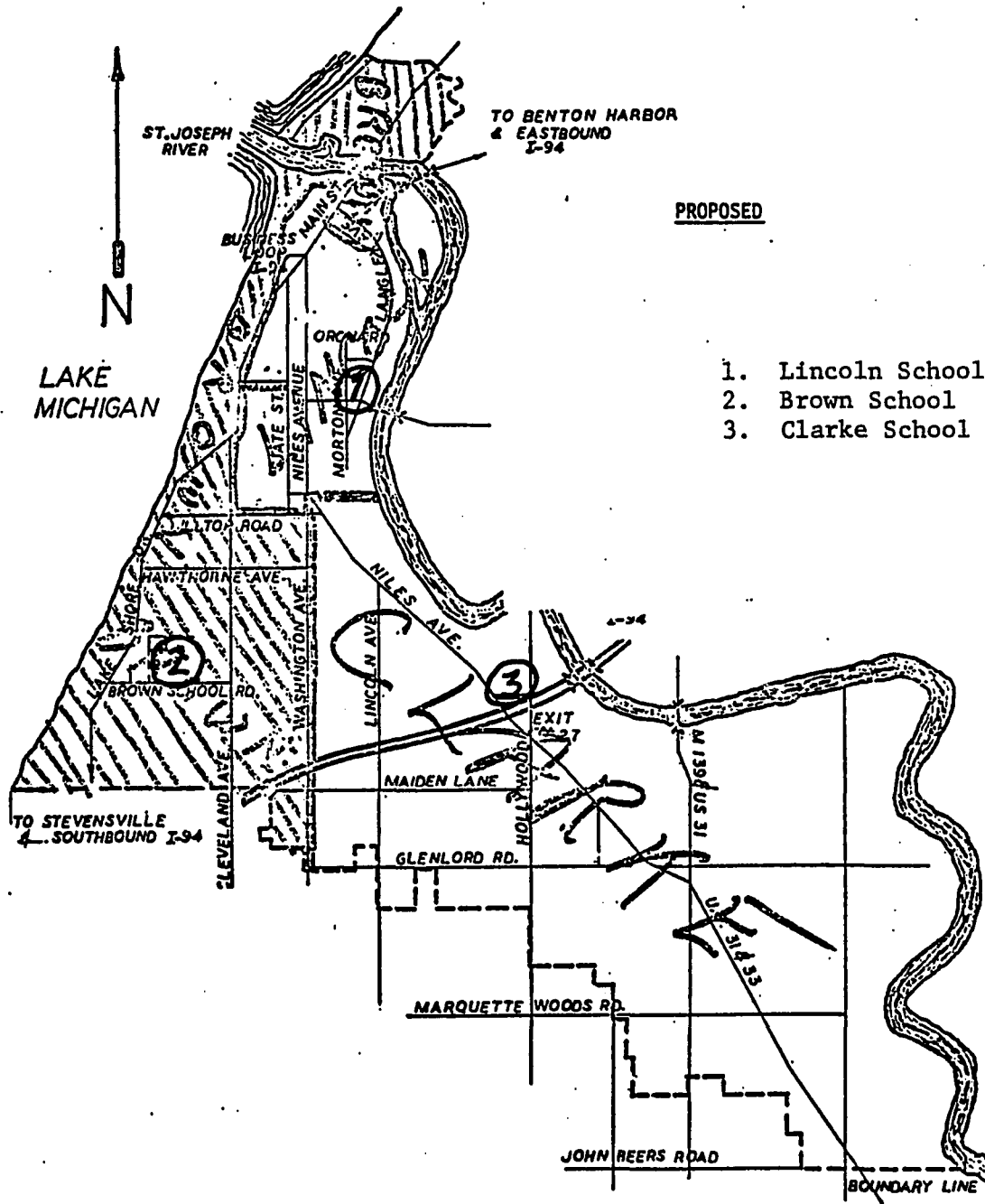
\*A few exceptions will exist along these boundaries for the sake of balancing class loads.

Tentative Assigned Numbers  
of Students

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Brown</u>	<u>Clarke</u>	<u>Lincoln</u>
1	52	51	53
2	53	53	58 (*4)
3	52	53	54 (*1)
4	51	51	54 (*1)
5	56	56 (*1)	55 (*3)
6	<u>52</u> (*1)	<u>81</u> (*1)	<u>56</u> (*4)
Total	316	345	330

\*Number of full-time Special Education

# ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL DISTRICT



[Reduced to 74% of original document]

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