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## A Report of an Internship in the Kalamazoo Public Schools Kalamazoo, Michigan

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A REPORT OF AN INTERNSHIP  
IN THE KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

by

Celeste Kaiser Vogan

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  
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A REPORT OF AN INTERNSHIP  
IN THE KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

Celeste Kaiser Vogan, Ed. S.

Western Michigan University, 1980

The purpose of this paper was to describe a six-week internship completed with the Kalamazoo Public Schools. The majority of the intern's time was spent observing the functions of the office of Employee Services and performing tasks related to that office.

Chapter I contained some background information describing Kalamazoo Public Schools. It also contained the intern's prospectus and rationale.

Chapter II described the director's role as head of Employee Services. The main focus of the material found in this chapter concerned layoffs, teacher attendance, morale, and SRI interviews.

Chapter III described the relationship between the office of Employee Services and substitute teachers. Teacher's evaluations of substitutes and the concerns of substitutes were explored. A suggested format for a substitute teacher handbook was provided.

Chapter IV described other learning situations experienced by the intern during the summer of 1980. These experiences had not been planned; therefore, they were not contained in the prospectus.

Chapter V summarized and evaluated the six-week internship. Suggestions and recommendations were offered to future interns who plan to work in the central office.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I wish to thank all of the excellent professors in the Department of Educational Leadership at Western Michigan University. I am especially grateful to my advisor Professor Carol F. Sheffer, who has continually given me counsel, instruction, and encouragement throughout my graduate studies at Western. Her generosity and enthusiasm have influenced me greatly, and I am forever grateful.

Secondly, a special thanks to all of the central office employees of Kalamazoo Public Schools and more specifically to Mahlon L. Lantz, who has taught me many human, as well as technical, skills relating to employee relations. I appreciated his, as well as Karen Wise's, unselfish and generous assistance and guidance throughout my six-week internship.

Without the assistance of the above-mentioned people, my thoughtful husband, Gene, and many others, this document would not have been possible; however, I accept full responsibility for all information contained within.

Celeste Kaiser Vogan

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS . . . . .	ii
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	iv
Chapter	
I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS . . . .	1
Internship Prospectus . . . . .	4
Projected Nature of Internship Experience . . . . .	6
Summary . . . . .	8
II. EMPLOYEE SERVICES AND TEACHERS . . . . .	9
Introduction . . . . .	9
Summary . . . . .	16
III. EMPLOYEE SERVICES AND SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS . . . . .	18
Introduction . . . . .	18
Summary . . . . .	27
IV. OTHER INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES . . . . .	28
Introduction . . . . .	28
Summary . . . . .	47
V. SUMMARY AND EVALUATION . . . . .	48
APPENDIX . . . . .	51
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	63

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Teacher Layoff List . . . . .	11
Table 2	Teachers With Zero Sick Days . . . . .	13
Table 3	Number of Years Experience of Teachers With Zero Sick Days . . . . .	15
Table 4	Grievant's Work Record . . . . .	35



## CHAPTER I

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

At the time of this internship, Kalamazoo Public Schools was classified as a Third Class school district as determined by Michigan General School Laws. The classification was based on student enrollment, which was projected to be 12,814 for the 1980-81 school year. This was a decrease of 304 students from the 1979-80 school year. Within the school district were 18 elementary schools; 3 junior high schools; 2 Class A high schools; 3 special education schools; a skills center; a continuing education program for young women, young parents and their children; an adult education program and community learning center; and, a public library.

There were many changes taking place in Kalamazoo Public Schools during the period of the internship. A recent millage defeat had left the school board with a projected \$2.8 million deficit for the 1980-81 school year. Seven schools were closed and 128 faculty positions were eliminated. Major position reductions were made in art, music, physical education, and health services. The school board was operating with 24.1 voted mills, which would expire in June 1981.

The school system was faced with several legal battles and grievances. One problem involved the conflict between the school board, the Kalamazoo Education Association (KEA), and the National

Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). This particular legal battle was encountered due to a request made by the school district to ask federal Judge Noel P. Fox to void a portion of the district's contract with the KEA which obligated the district to recall teachers on a seniority basis as they were needed. The school district wanted to rehire minority staff at a percentage level that would maintain the spirit of Judge Fox's 1971 desegregation order.

Another legal battle involved school redistricting. The school system was under court order to maintain racially-balanced schools. Due to decreasing enrollment and the closing of seven schools, many attendance boundaries had to be changed. The new boundaries needed to exhibit a racial balance and be approved by the court.

A potential legal battle was beginning to form between the district and "demoted" administrators. Because of closed buildings, several administrators were assigned to teaching responsibilities for the 1980 fall semester. The administrators believed that the decision by the school board was a breach of contract.

In the presence of those circumstances, the intern was assigned to the office of Employee Services located in the Central Administration Building. The office was staffed with a director, an assistant, a receptionist, and two secretaries. On the morning of June 10, 1980 a meeting was held with the director, the assistant, Dr. Carol F. Sheffer of Western Michigan University, and the intern. Several

concerns of the office of Employee Services were stated. From these discussions, the intern wrote the following prospectus and rationale.

## INTERNSHIP PROSPECTUS

SPONSORING ORGANIZATION: Kalamazoo Public Schools

FIELD SUPERVISOR: Mahlon Lantz, Director of Employee Services,  
Kalamazoo Public Schools

UNIVERSITY ADVISOR: Dr. Carol F. Sheffer, Western Michigan University

MAJOR FOCUS OF EXPERIENCE: To identify, examine, and possibly solve some problems encountered by Kalamazoo Public Schools during their reorganization process; especially, as these problems relate to teacher morale, teacher absenteeism, and low substitute evaluations.

DURATION: Monday, June 16, 1980--Tuesday, July 29, 1980  
Not including July 4 and the week of July 7

RATIONALE:

Public school systems--nationwide--are faced with similar problems: declining enrollment, millage defeats, teacher surplus, and decreasing state aid. These problems coupled with double-digit inflation, union demands, and federal (also state) mandates provide a continuous challenge to public school systems: the challenge of supplying the best possible education with limited human and financial resources.

Kalamazoo Public Schools is in the process of making some major decisions regarding the future of its school system.

Reductions are being made in all areas to decrease budgetary deficits. These reductions foreshadow some teacher-related problems which may occur in the near future: (a) staff morale may decrease as reductions are implemented, (b) teacher absenteeism may increase, and (c) in direct proportion with teacher absenteeism, the need for quality substitutes may also increase.

This internship provides an opportunity to examine teacher morale and identify some anticipated causes for a possible increased rate of absenteeism. The intern hopes to identify reasons for low substitute evaluations and provide some recommendations for improving them. In addition, the intern wishes to become involved in the process of interviewing and hiring substitutes and other necessary personnel.

## PROJECTED NATURE OF INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

OBJECTIVES	EXPERIENCES & CONTACTS	TECHNICAL SKILLS
A. <u>CONCEPTUAL</u>	The intern will -	The intern will be able to -
1. To <u>review</u> the available information on teacher absenteeism in Kalamazoo Public Schools.	<u>examine</u> existing records relating to teacher absenteeism.	make a <u>comparative study</u> listing the percent of sick days used by teachers during the past 15 years.
2. To <u>analyze</u> these data and determine a trend.	<u>review</u> the literature relating to teacher absenteeism; <u>synthesize</u> the body of research and opinion relating to teacher absenteeism and relate it to Kalamazoo's situation.	<u>speak</u> or <u>write</u> with authority on the information regarding teacher absenteeism and Kalamazoo Public Schools.
3. To <u>analyze</u> the evaluation system of substitutes.	<u>examine</u> existing records relating to substitute evaluations.	<u>compile</u> a list of the areas in which substitutes receive poor evaluations.
4. To <u>examine</u> these data and determine a trend.	<u>review</u> the literature relating to substitute evaluations; <u>synthesize</u> the body of research and opinion relating to substitute evaluations and relate it to Kalamazoo's situation.	<u>speak</u> or <u>write</u> with authority on the information regarding substitute evaluations and Kalamazoo Public Schools.
B. <u>HUMAN</u>	The intern will -	The intern will be able to -
1. To <u>become aware</u> of the teacher morale problem in Kalamazoo Public Schools.	<u>interview</u> several elementary teachers, preferably two from each building.	<u>summarize</u> the general feelings and morale of the teachers regarding the reorganization of Kalamazoo Public Schools.

OBJECTIVES	EXPERIENCES & CONTACTS	TECHNICAL SKILLS
2. To <u>comprehend</u> the nature of the substitute evaluation problem as seen by substitutes themselves.	<u>talk with</u> several substitutes (at least ten) regarding their feelings on substituting and their future aspirations.	<u>indicate</u> the correlation between teacher morale and substitute evaluations.
C. <u>TECHNICAL</u>	The intern will -	The intern will be able to -
1. To <u>develop</u> a written aid that administrators could use to encourage regular attendance and discourage absenteeism.	<u>review</u> the literature relating to teacher absenteeism and the means of controlling it. Also <u>request</u> input from administrators.	<u>assist</u> an administrator in developing her/his own methods for encouraging regular attendance and discouraging absenteeism.
2. To <u>develop</u> a written aid that teachers could use to help their substitutes achieve success in the classroom. (Also, <u>develop</u> a written aid for substitutes to use as an insurance for classroom success.)	<u>review</u> the literature relating to the substitute's survival in the classroom. Also, <u>request</u> input from teachers and substitutes.	to <u>assist</u> a teacher in planning for a substitute's successful classroom experience.
3. To <u>determine</u> some methods an administrator could use to boost the morale of her/his staff.	<u>review</u> the literature relating to teacher morale and what to do about it.	to <u>present</u> helpful solutions to an administrator who is having a morale problem within her/his school.
4. To <u>acquire</u> an increased understanding of the interviewing process	<u>observe</u> several interviews and <u>study</u> the methods used by the interviewer.	<u>analyze</u> tape-recorded interviews and <u>demonstrate</u> the ability to choose the best person for the job.

### Summary

This chapter presented a description of Kalamazoo Public Schools. A brief summary was given regarding the district's enrollment, financing, and legal encounters. The intern's prospectus and rationale were also included. The next chapter will describe the office of Employee Services as it related to teachers. Topics such as layoffs, teacher absenteeism, morale, and SRI interviews will be discussed.



## CHAPTER II

### EMPLOYEE SERVICES AND TEACHERS

#### Introduction

In the Kalamazoo Public Schools the office of Employee Services was responsible for the hiring (and firing) of the district's teachers and for maintaining various records regarding them. Some of those records included the following information for each teacher: certification, salary, and seniority date; a freedom from tuberculosis card; and, requests for leaves of absence.

#### Layoffs

As previously mentioned, Kalamazoo Public Schools was forced to close seven buildings in a desperate attempt to balance the budget. With the closing of five elementary schools and two junior high schools came the unavoidable laying off of 128 teachers. This group of teachers consisted of 76 tenured teachers and 52 probationary teachers.

The director of Employee Services decided to hold two meetings: one for the laid-off tenured teachers and one for the probationary teachers. The meetings followed this format: (a) a statement pertaining to the school budget, (b) the district's reasons for laying off, (c) an explanation of unemployment benefits, (d) an explanation of recall procedures, and (e) a reminder of the importance of checking Employee Services' records regarding current certification.

Many teachers had questions about unemployment, continuance of medical benefits, educational reimbursements, the possibility of joining the substitute teacher list, middle school certification, recalling procedures, and the possibility of another millage vote before school would resume in the fall. Not all of these questions could be answered (at that time), so the director assured those teachers that a letter would be written within a week addressing their concerns. This was done as promised. The intern was responsible for writing the paragraph regarding certification:

Enclosed is a list of the information we have on your certification. If there is an error, please let us know within a week. We request a copy of your certification if it differs from our records.

In preparation for court hearings, the director requested that the intern develop a table which would display the racial make-up of the laid-off teachers. The director believed that such a table would supply him with crucial statistics regarding the number of minority laid-off teachers. The statistics would be of value in the event of legal questioning relating to the comparison between the number of laid-off black teachers and laid-off white teachers. With that purpose, the intern developed the following table.

Table 1

## Teacher Layoff List

		Black	Hispanic	Caucasian	Indian
Probationary	Male	4	0	2	0
	Female	9	3	33	1
Tenured	Male	6	0	19	0
	Female	5	0	36	0

A second table was also completed. It contained an alphabetical listing of schools and the names of minority teachers laid off within each school. The purpose of the second table (not shown here) was to supply the director with statistics regarding the teacher racial balance within each school.

Teacher Attendance and Morale

In an effort to decrease the amount of money the district could possibly spend on substitute teachers during the 1980-81 school year, the director requested that the intern study the problem of poor teacher attendance. He suggested that Kalamazoo Public Schools be compared with other Michigan schools of similar size: namely, Battle Creek and Lansing.

The study in its entirety is contained in the Appendix. Briefly stated, it had the following format. The intern began by reviewing the literature regarding the problems of poor attendance. Research repeatedly concluded that poor attendance was related to a decrease in morale and an increase in collective bargaining legislation.

Researchers advised administrators to become aware of the symptoms of low morale and to devise ways to promote and maintain high morale. The intern then reviewed the studies on teacher absenteeism done by the Battle Creek Public Schools and the Lansing Public Schools. In comparison to those schools, Kalamazoo appeared to have a low teacher-absenteeism rate. The intern concluded the study with some suggestions to increase morale and reduce absenteeism.

#### Teachers With Zero Sick Days

As a follow-up to the research on teacher attendance, the director requested that the intern compile a list of names of teachers who had used more than half of their allotted sick days since the date they were hired. Due to the confidentiality of that information, it is not printed here. However, from the original list of 346 teachers, a condensed table of all teachers having zero sick days was developed. That table, omitting the names, is printed on the next page. Following it is a summary of observations made regarding teachers having a balance of zero sick days..

Table 2

## Teachers With Zero Sick Days

Name	Hired	Sick Days Possible	Sick Days Balance	Days Used 1979-80	Days Used 1978-79
A	1-70	100	0	10	10
B	1-74	65	-10.5	15.5	5.5
C	2-78	24	0	21.5	2
D	9-66	140	- 2.5	10	10
E	9-75	40	0	10	10
F	1-66	145	0	10	10
G	8-75	50	0	11	13
H	9-77	30	0	26	2.5
I	8-79	10	0	10	--
J	2-76	44	0	10	10.5
K	9-77	30	0	10	10
L	2-80	5	0	5	--
M	5-72	81	0	10	19
N	8-67	130	0	16	4
O	8-67	130	0	10	17.5
P	8-78	20	0	13	7
Q	8-68	120	0	11.5	15.5
R	1-79	13	0	8	4.5
S	8-74	60	0	10	17
T	8-68	120	- 8	21.5	6.5
U	1-76	46.5	- 0.5	10.5	10
V	10-77	29	- 7	18	8.5
W	?-66	140	0	10	11
X	9-74	59	- 6	45	2
Y	8-60	200	- 7	20.5	63
Z	2-76	44	-24	34	11
AA	9-70	95	-20	43	7
BB	1-74	65	0	24.5	5
CC	2-63	174	0	12	8

Some conclusions may be drawn from the preceding table "Teachers With Zero Sick Days." Kalamazoo Public Schools, in comparison with similar schools, did not appear to have a teacher attendance problem. However, in a detailed study of 876 sick day cards, 346 teachers had used over half of their sick days (ten given each year). In other words, 39 percent of the teachers had used an average of five or more sick days a year from their beginning date of employment. Furthermore, 29 teachers (three percent of the total teaching body) had a balance of zero sick days. The following six items are some observations made by the intern regarding those 29 teachers.

1. One hundred percent used all--or more than all--of their sick days in the last two years.
2. Thirty-one percent used ten sick days each year for the last two years.
3. Ninety-three percent were born after 1940. (One might speculate that the age of those teachers may correlate with their work ethics or ideas concerning job loyalty.)
4. Thirty-eight percent were minorities. That representation seemed high in view of the fact that minorities represented only 12.6 percent of the total teaching body.
5. The group of 29 teachers could have averaged 76 accumulated sick days; instead, actual accumulated sick days were zero.
6. The following table represents the number of years experience of the 29 teachers with zero sick days.

Table 3

## Number of Years Experience of Teachers With Zero Sick Days

Years Experience	Number of Teachers
0-3	8
4-6	7
7-9	3
10-12	4
13-15	5
16-18	1
19-21	1

One might rightfully conclude that a greater number of teachers with fewer years experience were using allotted sick days.

#### SRI Interviews

The success or failure of a school system depends on the people within it. It is the ultimate desire of nearly every educational institution to be sure there is a teacher in every classroom who cares that every student learns and grows and feels like a real human being.

Employee Services is responsible for identifying those teachers who have this capacity to contribute to the lives of others in positive ways. Employee Services must make a differentiation between those teachers who are outstanding, caring people, and those who are not. For those reasons, the director became involved in an interviewing process known as Selection Research, Incorporated or SRI. This interviewing process was based on the assumption that if an

administrator screened the applicants well, the quality of the faculty would improve, thereby increasing the quality of education in a particular school and decreasing the likelihood of future problems.

SRI was founded in the early 1950's. Since then it developed into a very successful method of interviewing teachers. After a series of 60 questions based on twelve themes, the interviewer is able to score the potential teacher. This score can be compared to the other applicants' scores, thereby enabling the interviewer to choose the best person for the job. Much research had been done by SRI. Reportedly, the SRI interview process can accurately predict a teacher's success in the classroom.

Due to the lack of hiring being done in the Kalamazoo Public Schools, the intern was not able to participate in any SRI interviews; however, all the materials the director owned were studied. The intern listened to many tapes and practiced scoring several of them. The director spent an hour one day discussing the process and its ability to predict success. He believed that the only drawback was the length of time (one and one-half hours) it took to complete an SRI interview. The interview is not only taped, but also typed.

#### Summary

This chapter described the director's role as head of Employee Services. The main focus of the material in this chapter concerned layoffs, teacher attendance, morale, and SRI interviews. The next chapter will describe the relationship between the office of Employee



Services and substitute teachers. Substitutes' evaluations will be explored and the format for a substitute teacher's handbook will be suggested.

## CHAPTER III

### EMPLOYEE SERVICES AND SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

#### Introduction

The director of Employee Services was responsible for all personnel. To aid him in this task was his assistant, the personnel supervisor. One of the main responsibilities of the personnel supervisor was the task of monitoring the progress of substitute teachers. This chapter describes the relationship between the office of Employee Services and substitute teachers. It also explores the concerns of substitutes and suggests a format for a substitute teacher handbook.

#### Teachers' Evaluations of Substitutes

The personnel supervisor not only interviewed and hired substitutes, but also followed their successes and failures by reading their evaluations. Those evaluations were provided by each classroom teacher upon her/his return to the classroom. Monthly, buildings sent accumulated evaluations to the office of Employee Services.

The personnel supervisor stated concern regarding the increasing number of low evaluations for substitutes. Consequently, the intern reviewed the 1979-80 evaluation binder. (The office of Employee Services kept a yearly three-ring notebook containing accumulated substitute teacher evaluations.) A list of positive comments was compiled, as well as a separate list of negative comments. From those, the intern wrote "Ten Do's For a Substitute Teacher."

1. Be prepared to meet the challenge! It is always of value to have a knowledge of the "growth and development" of the students you are about to teach.

2. Maintain established routines to the extent it is possible to do so. It is easier to maintain order and good control when there is little interruption of routines.

3. Adhere to the assignments listed in the plan book. Before the day begins, it is wise to read the substitute folder, study the lesson plans, and then organize the teaching materials. Good organization requires good planning.

4. Be firm and friendly. Greet the students at the door with a smile. Introduce yourself (by writing your name on the board) as a teacher taking the place of (name) today. Let the children know what their teacher expects of them while s/he is absent. In some cases, let the children help with decision making, but be ready with a firm decision if the situation calls for it.

5. Keep a careful watch on supplies. Make sure that children return pens, pencils, crayons, scissors, rulers, etc. to their correct places of storage.

6. Be consistent and fair. Do not let your management techniques depend on your mood. If a certain behavior is unacceptable one day, it should be unacceptable the next. Use praise and correction when it is honest, and when it will contribute to the growth and education of the student.

7. Avoid conflicts. A student, when observed by her/his peers, will not often yield in an argument with an adult. A simple way to approach a conflict is to discuss it after class. This gives both of you time to "cool off."

8. Be responsible for the care and treatment of the classroom and equipment. It is always a pleasant experience for a teacher to return to school the following morning and see the room clean and organized.

9. Leave a detailed summary of the day. Try to be as optimistic as possible; listing the plans which were completed, and the papers and workbook pages which were corrected. If a problem occurred, explain it to the teacher and summarize the steps you used to alleviate the problem.

10. Examine yourself. A teacher must have confidence, patience enthusiasm, a sense of humor, manners, and a good rapport with children. Students learn from the models they observe.

#### Substitutes' Concerns

Kalamazoo Public Schools provide each teacher with a form for evaluating her/his substitute. At the time of the internship, however, the school system did not provide the substitute teacher with a form for evaluating the teacher for whom s/he substituted. To obtain evaluative information from a substitute's point of view, the intern developed a telephone questionnaire. Ten substitute teachers (chosen from a list of substitutes who had worked more than 90 days during the 1979-80 school year) were telephoned.

When phoning, the intern introduced herself as a student from Western Michigan University doing an internship with the director of Employee Services. The intern also stated her desire to assist substitute teachers in having a successful day every time they substituted. Possibly, by relaying the substitute's concerns to the classroom teacher (through Employee Services), this mission could be accomplished.

Each substitute was asked a series of six questions: (a) What are some thoughts or concerns that cross your mind while driving to an assigned school?, (b) What makes the difference between a successful and an unsuccessful day?, (c) Do you have any suggestions for the teacher for whom you are subbing?, (d) Do you have any suggestions for the remaining faculty and staff with whom you are working that day?, (e) What are your future aspirations in the field of education?, and (f) Do you have any additional comments or concerns? S/He was told to answer the questions openly and honestly; her/his name would be held in strictest confidence. The following is a summary of the responses to the telephone questionnaire directed toward substitute teachers.

#### Summary of Telephone Questionnaire Directed Toward Substitute Teachers

1. What are some thoughts or concerns that cross your mind while driving to an assigned school? "Will there be good lesson plans?" "Will I have any serious behavior problems?" "Will the principal and staff be supportive?" "What will I do if there are no lesson plans?" "What should I expect from this grade level?"

"Where do I park or store my lunch?" "What is the physical outlay of the building?" "How much time will I have to get things ready?"

(One substitute mentioned that thoughts differ according to building, teacher, subject, and day of the week.)

2. What makes the difference between a successful and an unsuccessful day? A good day occurs when the learning environment has been maintained; when the lessons were completed; when the children were able to adjust to changes, could work independently, and knew expectations; when the substitute felt s/he could handle problems; when the classroom was organized; when there's a good attitude toward a substitute; and, when there was time to get organized before the first class arrived. A bad day occurs when any of the above does not happen, or when the substitute feels s/he has merely babysat all day.

3. Do you have any suggestions for the teacher for whom you are subbing? Leave detailed plans and additional activities; supply a list of reliable children and children with problems; prepare your class not to "look down" on substitutes; and, leave suggestions for handling discipline problems. One substitute suggested that each teacher be required to substitute a few times to see what it is like; another substitute thought that plans were too rigid, at times, and didn't allow for flexibility.

4. Do you have any suggestions for the remaining faculty and staff with whom you are working that day? It would be nice if the neighboring teachers would come in and introduce themselves; say what position they hold; offer assistance; and, be friendly.

5. What are your future aspirations in the field of education?

Four wanted a full-time job; three wanted to continue substituting-- a couple mentioned until retirement; two are not sure if they want a full-time job; one wanted to run her own preschool.

6. Do you have any additional comments or concerns? "I'm con-

cerned about the attitudes of children today; not only in Kalamazoo Public Schools, but everywhere." "Things seem to be unsettled; if things get too rough or confusing, I'll probably stop working."

"All Kalamazoo substitutes should be able to evaluate teachers."

"Each building should have a written instruction sheet about policies (bathroom, etc.). The principal should avail her/himself to help, or s/he should stop by for a visit." "Pay should be more." "Procedures at lunch, bathroom, greeting, etc., are so different from building to building. They should be written."

By analyzing the answers to those six questions, the intern was able to compile a list of "Ten Do's For a Teacher (In Preparation For a Substitute)." The intern believes the following suggestions to be a valuable aid in assuring an uninterrupted education for each student.

Ten Do's For a Teacher (In Preparation For a Substitute)

1. Prepare your students (at the beginning of each quarter or semester) for an occasional substitute visit.
2. Assure your students that a substitute is a qualified teacher with the desire to provide each student with an uninterrupted education.

3. If you feel an illness coming on, mention to your class how you feel, and that you might be absent.

4. When a special project is scheduled to begin on a certain day, and you are not able to be there, discuss with your students the importance of being flexible. Such activities might be postponed at a moment's notice. Children appreciate being made alert to the possibility of postponement, rather than a complete let-down.

5. Focus on the subject matter. In classrooms where teachers have not placed themselves directly between the student and subject matter, students tend to work contentedly and are not overly bothered by having a stranger in the room.

6. Prepare your daily lesson plans in a clear and concise manner. Make sure dittos are prepared and manuals and supplies are readily available.

7. Have class seating charts available.

8. Frequently review classroom and school rules with the children. It is important for students to know what is acceptable behavior, and why we expect them to act in a certain way.

9. Occasionally a disruption occurs which interrupts the day's intended schedule. Leave a list for the substitute of things that help get your students back on task.

10. Praise independence exhibited by the students.

#### Handbooks for Substitute Teachers

Many school systems supply their substitute teachers with a handbook. During the past school year, the personnel supervisor had



collected sample substitute handbooks from several Michigan Public Schools including Lansing, Battle Creek, Bay City, and Midland. Those handbooks contained valuable information for a substitute--everything from a welcome to a farewell.

Kalamazoo Public Schools (during a previous Superintendent's administration) had developed a handbook for substitutes. However, this handbook had not been updated for five years; so, the director asked the intern to critique it and give suggestions for a new one.

To accomplish that task, the intern telephoned all building principals, asking them to send to the Central Administration Building any materials they used for briefing substitutes in their particular building. After a careful review of those materials, as well as a review of the handbooks from other Michigan schools, the intern comprised a list of items believed to be important for a substitute teacher to know. The intern then developed the following sample format for a substitute teacher handbook. The following 14 items should be contained within the handbook.

#### Sample Format For a Substitute Teacher Handbook

1. Attractive cover
2. A letter from the principal/superintendent
  - a. welcoming the substitute
  - b. stating the school's educational philosophy
  - c. wishing the substitute success
3. Table of Contents
4. School Calendar

5. Terms of Employment (pay, requirements, etc.)
6. List of School Employees and Positions
7. General School Rules and Other Necessities
  - a. procedures and behavior in halls, lunchroom, lavatories, assemblies, and on playground
  - b. A-V equipment and procedures
  - c. location of teacher' lounge, lavatory, coffee, lunchroom
8. Classroom procedures
  - a. daily schedule of classes and specials
  - b. attendance
  - c. pencil sharpening
  - d. lavatories
  - e. behavior
  - f. dependable children who can assist
  - g. children who will need special help
  - h. location of materials (plan book, paper, dittos, manuals, seating charts, supplies)
  - i. grading system used
9. Copies of clinic slip, permission slip, library permit, etc.
10. Map of school
11. Fire Drill and Disaster Procedures
12. Special Requests from the teacher
  - a. It is important to (name of regular teacher) that you....
  - b. If things get away from you, (name of regular teacher) suggests that you....

13. Before you leave, check to see that:
  - a. windows are closed
  - b. lights are out
  - c. blackboards are cleaned
  - d. chairs, tables, and desks are properly arranged
  - e. a summary of the day is left on the teacher's desk
  - f. door is locked
14. Ten Do's For a Substitute Teacher

#### Summary

This chapter described the office of Employee Services as it related to substitute teachers. Teachers' evaluations of substitutes and the concerns of substitutes were explored. The chapter ended with a suggested format for a substitute teacher handbook. The next chapter will describe experiences which were not contained in the intern's prospectus.

## CHAPTER IV

### OTHER INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES

#### Introduction

Many learning situations were experienced by the intern during the summer of 1980. Those experiences had not been planned; therefore, they were not contained in the prospectus. The following tasks were performed by the intern and are described in this chapter: (a) assigning students to new schools; (b) completing a fringe benefit survey; (c) recognizing office staff concerns; (d) attending grievance proceedings; (e) completing a wage comparison; (f) attending a court hearing regarding the disruption of teacher racial balance resulting from spring layoffs; and (g) comparing Kalamazoo and Portage School Boards.

#### Students Assigned to New Schools

In an effort to balance the budget, the superintendent of Kalamazoo Public Schools (on January 14, 1980) established the Committee for Organizational and Financial Planning. This committee was charged to prepare recommendations regarding the reorganization of the schools. The committee, under the leadership of the Employee Services Director, was composed of about sixty administrators, teachers, other school employees, parents, citizens, and students. Its work was aided by consultants from area colleges. Seven subcommittees were established and given specific charges. The

subcommittees studied and reported on long-range enrollment, finances, facilities, grade groupings, staffing, racial balance, and transportation.

From January through April, committee and community meetings were held. As expected, community members did not care which neighborhood school was closed, as long as it was not theirs! Parents of school-age children were also concerned about the proposed grade groupings (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12). They did not want kindergarteners bused, and they were worried about "role models" for all ages. It was clear that parents had become comfortable with the current grade groupings (K-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12) and were not very willing to change.

By June, however, final decisions were made. Seven schools were closed. The grade groupings remained similar to the 1979-80 school year. However, there were three exceptions: (a) some schools were changed to K-6, (b) the junior high schools only housed grades 7-8, and (c) ninth graders were moved to the high schools. Kindergarteners would continue to walk to their neighborhood school provided it was still open and within walking distance.

The Director of Child Accounting was given federal guidelines for reassigning children to the remaining open schools. The guidelines included (a) equalize the "burden of busing," that is, the bulk of busing should not be born by one particular neighborhood; (b) maintain a "critical mass," that is, maintain a Black population large enough to have an impact on each school (recommended to be 20 percent or more of the entire population); (c) maintain stability, that is, the children in a particular elementary school should be

promoted together to the same junior high and high school; and (d) provide a balanced mixture of socio-economic levels, that is, the general socio-economic level of the school's population would be a microcosm of the district's socio-economic level.

With deadlines to be met, the Director of Child Accounting made an appeal to the Director of Employee Services to spare his intern for a few days. The intern then assisted the Director of Child Accounting with reassigning the children of closed schools to the remaining open schools. The Director of Child Accounting did the arithmetic (in accordance with the federal guidelines) associated with the task. The intern traced new maps and overlays onto various colors of acetate. These were displayed at the next board meeting.

#### Fringe Benefit Survey

The office of Employee Services received a survey entitled "National Survey of Fringe Benefits in Public Schools 1979-80 for Administrators and Teachers." The director assigned the intern the task of completing that survey.

The survey requested the dollar amount paid by the school system for medical, dental, optical, and life insurances. The survey also requested the dollar amount the school system paid for continuing education, retirement, travel, and conference expenses. The answers to the survey were found in the administrators' contracts, teachers' contracts, and the director's data binder (a three-ring notebook containing statistics--employees' salaries, retirement and medical benefits, etc.--for each school year). The intern spent an

afternoon completing the survey. The portion concerning the superintendent's fringe benefits was left blank as the directions stated that the superintendent was to personally complete her/his portion of the survey. The purpose of the survey was to compare fringe benefits at a national level in hopes of providing leverage for administrators and teachers during negotiations.

#### Recognition of Office Staff

After a meeting with the President and Vice President of the Office Staff's Union (KAEOE), it was decided that the intern should submit a few suggestions to the director of Employee Services recommending extrinsic rewards for school secretaries. The director admired and respected that hard-working group and believed that they sometimes deserved more than a pat on the back and a big "thanks!"

The intern reviewed the literature at Western Michigan University and informally interviewed the secretaries at Kalamazoo Public Schools. The following list of suggestions was submitted to the director of Employee Services.

1. Sponsor an orientation luncheon or mid-year breakfast on district time.
2. Reward secretaries for their loyal service with a sterling silver stickpin. Engrave "KPS" on it and the number of years they have been employed.
3. Plan an afternoon style show (on National Secretaries' Day) and serve refreshments.
4. Allow secretaries visitation opportunities. Many secretaries

(especially in the Administration Building) have talked with their colleagues on the phone many times, but they have never seen them or where they work.

5. Give the secretary a day off on her/his birthday.

6. Put an ad in the Kalamazoo Gazette or school newspaper thanking secretaries for their loyal service. Have their pictures and names on the page (similar to the way banks and realtors do).

Another opportunity to observe the director as he related to office staff occurred at a morning meeting of all KPS secretaries. The director's desire to give extrinsic rewards manifested itself in the way he provided rolls and coffee.

The purpose of the meeting was to let the office personnel know that the administration was not able to give them their placement letters for fall. Ordinarily, all support personnel receive notification regarding their assignments. The director told them that he realized that was not in accordance with their contracts, but because of school closings, 1980-81 assignments were impossible to make. He assured them they would all have a position in the fall, and the secretaries in the closed buildings would be reassigned.

There would be a lot of secretaries transferring with their administrators, but there would be no seniority "bump" system. ("Bumping" does not work with office staff because of the special relationship and loyalty that develops between secretaries and principals.)

The director referred to the grievance procedure supplied in



the KAEOE contract; however, he stated that he would rather have a grieved secretary write him a letter and talk to him personally to see if the grievance could be resolved. In ending, the director stated his admiration and respect for the hard-working group, and that he appreciated the way they were readily responsive to changing conditions.

#### Grievance Proceedings

During the six weeks in the office of Employee Services, the intern witnessed two grievances, one of which was settled in the director's office, the other through a mediator.

The first grievance involved a person classified as a Supervisory/Technical Employee. The employee was needed to work extra hours during the summer. The disagreement surfaced when the employee believed there was a discrepancy between the hourly wage paid during the school year, and the hourly wage being offered for the summer.

The director took the following steps to resolve that grievance:

- (a) a meeting was held with all Supervisory/Technical Employees in the grievant's building. The contract and benefits were discussed. That meeting's purpose was to clarify the job description of those employees.
- (b) As the employee in question disagreed with the number of hours she was told to work and the number of hours the contract stated, a personal conference to discuss the matter was scheduled.
- (c) The intern prepared a table which displayed the history of the grievant's employ as a supervisor. It was noticed that in 1978-79 the grievant worked a 7-hour day, but was paid for 8 hours. The

director believed there was a communication problem, as he remembered a verbal agreement between the grievant's supervisor and himself which changed the employee's workday from 7 to 8 hours. (d) Blaming no one, the director admitted that an obvious series of errors had happened, and he had two alternatives: one, to continue paying the employee \$7.38/hour (which would be unfair to the other employees), or two, to rectify the mistake by paying her a just wage of \$6.33/hour for the summer months (the wage she should have been paid during the 1979-80 school year), and then offer an 8 percent increase for 1980-81 working an 8-hour day. (e) After reviewing the grievant's job description, the director also realized that her job did not actually appear to be supervisory in nature as she was not actually supervising other employees; therefore, he believed the wage he was offering was more than just.

The grievance concluded with the employee agreeing to the second alternative. The following table demonstrates the grievant's work record from date of employment to 1980-81.

Table 4

## Grievant's Work Record

Year	Salary	Hourly Wage	Hours/Day	Hours/Year	Days/Year
1977-78	\$ 6,359	\$3.95*	8	1608	201
1978-79	9,500	6.85	7	1386	198
1979-80	10,234	7.38	7	1386	198
1979-80	10,234	6.33**	8	1616	202
1980-81	11,053	6.84	8	1616	202

\*The employee was not yet working as a supervisor.

\*\*The employee should have been working at this rate during 1979-80.

The second grievance occurred on the last day of the internship. That hearing was of a formal nature involving a professional mediator, the president of the Kalamazoo Education Association (teachers' union) and an attorney representing the department of Employee Services.

The grievants were two high school teachers who had been laid off at the end of the 1978-79 school year. They believed they were not justly recalled in 1979-80. The grievants objected to the fact that teachers of less seniority were recalled and asked to teach subjects which reflected their major focus of college study. (For example, a less senior teacher whose major area of concentration in college was Mathematics, might be recalled instead of the grievants, to teach Junior High School Mathematics.) The two grievants believed that they were properly qualified for the junior high school positions since their certificates stated their ability to teach all

subjects in grades seven and eight.

The attorney for the school system stated that recalls were to be done according to "qualifications" not "certifications." The attorney stated that being certified does not mean being qualified. (For instance, neither of the teachers believed that they were "qualified" to teach Spanish in grades seven and eight, although they were "certified" to teach all subjects.)

The president of the KEA believed that the teachers in question were qualified for the vacant positions, at junior high school level, and should have been recalled according to seniority. The mediator had not reached a final decision of the matter by the time the internship was completed.

#### Wage Savings Projected for 1980-81

To be prepared for an Executive Board Meeting, the director needed a summary sheet showing the savings Kalamazoo Public Schools would experience after closing seven schools. The intern was assigned the task of writing a "Staffing Budget Summary 1979-80, 1980-81." The following steps were taken in the preparation of the summary.

1. Information was needed regarding the number of people employed in the following capacities: principals, assistant principals/deans, office personnel and operation (custodians). To acquire this information, the intern used the director's data binder and the computer printout for the 1979-80 budget.

2. The cost of fringe and retirement benefits were also

computed.

37

3. The 1979-80 salary and benefit totals were compared to the projected 1980-81 salary and benefit totals.

4. Those comparisons were summarized as follows.

Staffing Budget Summary 1979-80

Employee	Av. Salary	Staff 1979-80	Salary 1979-80
Principals, Elem.	\$25,084	22	\$ 550,440
Jr. Hi.	27,084	5	135,420
Sr. Hi.	33,096	2	66,192
Asst. Prin./Deans			
Elem.	22,996	0	-0-
Jr. Hi.	22,996	5	114,980
Sr. Hi.	24,339	6	146,034
Office	9,421	52.5	494,602
Operations	\$5.22 x 2,088 hours	98.5	1,073,586

Schools To Be Closed in 1980-81

School	Office	Operations
Brucker	1	2
Burke	1	1.5
McKinley	1	1.5
South Westnedge	1	1.5
Vine	1	2
West Main	1	1.5
Wilson	1	1.5

Projected Staffing Budget Summary 1980-81

Staff 80-81	Salary 80-81	Fringe per Emp.	Ret. per Emp.	Dif.	Salary - / +	Fringe Savings	Ret. -/+
17	\$ 425,340	\$2,330	\$1,251	-5	\$125,100	\$11,650	\$6,255
3	81,252	2,330	1,354	-2	54,168	4,660	2,708
2	66,192	2,330	1,655	0	-0-	-0-	-0-
3	68,988	2,330	1,150	+3	68,988	6,990	3,450
3	68,988	2,330	1,150	-2	45,992	4,660	2,300
8	194,712	2,330	1,217	+2	48,678	4,660	2,434
44	414,524	1,670	471	-8.5	80,078	14,195	4,004
92	1,002,741	958	545	-6.5	70,846	6,227	3,543
Total \$ Deleted					\$376,184	\$41,392	\$18,810
Total \$ Added					117,666	11,650	5,884
Total \$ Saved					\$258,518 (Salary)	\$29,742 (Fringe)	\$12,926 (Retire.)
Total Projected Savings for 1980-81					\$301,186		

These lists were presented at the Board Meeting. The director of Employee Services was responsible for showing the Board how the school system could save \$301,186 by closing seven schools.

Court Hearing

During the week of July 21, the intern was able to observe a U.S. District Court hearing. The hearing was requested by an attorney for Kalamazoo Public Schools asking Judge Noel P. Fox to void a portion of the district contract with the Kalamazoo Education Association. This portion in question obligated the district to recall teachers on a seniority basis as they were needed. The attorney argued that the school district wanted to rehire minority staff to the percentage level attained during the 1978-79 school year. It was the attorney's position that this would maintain the spirit of Judge Fox's 1971 desegregation order.

Before the school district laid off 52 probationary teachers (17 minorities, 13 of those black) and 76 tenured teachers (21 minorities, all of them black), the district had reached a percentage level of 12.6 minority teaching staff (11.1 percent black). But as a result of lay offs, minority representation dropped to 9.8 percent. Blacks represented 8.9 percent of the staff. The director believed that he would need to recall 15 black teachers in order to return to the 1978-79 ratio of minority teachers to whites.

Attorneys for the NAACP contended in court that the district should not have laid off any black teachers, and that doing so violated their constitutional rights. The attorney representing the Kalamazoo Education Association (Teachers' Union) argued that Kalamazoo Public Schools was not selling their empty buildings to provide revenues to recall teachers. He also contended that too

much money was planned to be spent on building improvements, instead of rehiring laid-off teachers.

By the end of the internship, Judge Noel P. Fox had not yet reached a decision regarding Kalamazoo Public Schools. He hoped to have an opinion ready before school started.

In the meantime, the NAACP attorneys were threatening the Superintendent with a contempt-of-court citation because they were not given sufficient time to approve the extensive reorganization of the school district's attendance boundaries. Also, in the courts was a class-action lawsuit against the Kalamazoo School Board filed August 5. The suit was initiated by administrators who alledged wrong doing on the part of the school board when it transferred some administrators to teachers on July 31, 1980.

Near the end of the internship there was a strong possibility that Kalamazoo Public Schools would not open as scheduled on September 2, 1980. The entire reorganization plan was in jeopardy, and the superintendent believed that the NAACP would not permit him to do anything that was different from the previous year. In short, this meant that the schools that were closed might have to reopen, and that the teachers who were laid off might have to report to their former positions.

#### School Board Comparisons

It was interesting for the intern to compare the ways that the School Boards of Kalamazoo and Portage operated. The intern attended six school board meetings in Kalamazoo and three in Portage.



Attention at those meetings was focused on the boards' goals, seating arrangement, agenda, atmosphere, authority figures, and community involvement.

41

Background. Both Kalamazoo and Portage Boards of Education were elected policy-making bodies of seven members each. The seven members were elected for four-year terms. To ensure that there were always some experienced trustees on the boards, terms were staggered so that two board members were elected one year, two the next, two the next, and one the next. After each year's election, the members voted among themselves to determine the positions of Board President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Trustees.

The State of Michigan General School Laws established the Boards' duties. Kalamazoo and Portage were both classified as Third Class school districts. This was based on student enrollment. Any school system with 2,400 to 30,000 students qualified as a third class district. Kalamazoo had approximately 13,000 students, while Portage had 9,000.

The duties of the Boards included election of Board officers, by-laws, record of meetings; employment and evaluation of a Superintendent, listing her/his duties and salary; appointment of a business manager; and personnel matters. The Boards had many powers. They could locate, acquire, and purchase or lease property; purchase, lease, acquire or build facilities; sell, exchange or lease property; establish and maintain grades, schools, and departments or courses it deemed necessary; set the school calendar; create and approve a

budget and levy taxes for the operation of the district; and establish and maintain a library and/or museum, if it so desired.

The State of Michigan General School Laws differed from the State School Code in that the Laws established the board's duties, while the Code instructed the Kalamazoo and Portage Boards of Education in special areas such as the Open Meetings Act, textbooks, health and physical education, teacher certificates, student counts, and special education. By law, Boards held regular sessions on Monday nights (unless individual boards took action to change that). Kalamazoo held its regular meetings on the first and third Mondays of the month. Portage held its meetings on the second and fourth Mondays.

Goals (Kalamazoo). In the summer of 1980, Kalamazoo's Board of Education elected a new President. Her term was at a time of controversy and confusion. The board, in a financial bind, decided to close seven schools, lay off 128 teachers, and reduce programs. Under a federal court desegregation order since 1971, the school district changed its attendance boundaries to correspond with the closing of schools so that buildings would remain racially balanced. This reorganization had not yet received court approval. The new board president believed that one of her first jobs was to have the board establish goals for itself. However, at the time of the internship, the short- and long-range goals had not been established. Kalamazoo's School Board had the reputation of one that was always "putting out fires."

Goals (Portage). The Portage School Board had recently adopted a new philosophy. It stated that Portage Public Schools would no longer be all things to all people. The school district would continue to offer quality educational programs to Portage students, but parents were going to have to accept more responsibility for the special and extracurricular needs of their children through programs offered in the community.

Portage's new philosophy was expected to prepare the way for changes that the school board would have to make in the future. Administrators said that personnel layoffs, building closings, and program cutbacks became more and more probable as student enrollments dropped, state aid to schools was reduced, and the rate of inflation spiraled upward.

In contrast with Kalamazoo's "putting out fires" philosophy, Portage seemed to plan ahead. In September of 1979, reorganization committees for elementary, middle, and secondary curriculum were formed to develop grade-level educational philosophies. By 1981 the district planned to adopt a K-5, 6-8, 9-12 grade configuration. At the time of the internship, it used a K-6, 7-9, 10-12 grade configuration. In addition to planning ahead for curriculum changes, the Portage School Board referred to their ten-year enrollment projections in order to anticipate school closings. The schools were closed gradually as enrollment dropped, and they were appraised and sold by professionals.

Board Seating Arrangements. The Kalamazoo Board of Education sat around a custom-made elongated hexagon-shaped table. The center

seat was occupied by the board president. To her right was the superintendent; to her left was the business manager. Eight additional people sat at the table including the other board officers and the trustees.

The Portage Board of Education sat in a curved panel formation on a slightly raised platform. The center seat was occupied by the superintendent. To his right was the board president; to his left was the board vice president. The other seven seats were occupied by the remaining officers, four trustees, and the business manager.

Both boards used microphones when speaking. When a Kalamazoo community member wished to speak, s/he stepped up to the head table and used a microphone. When a Portage community member wished to speak, s/he remained standing at her/his chair and used no microphone.

Kalamazoo's additional administrative team members sat at a rectangular table to the right of the superintendent. Microphones were provided. Portage's additional administrative team members sat where they chose within the audience. The significance of the seating arrangements will be discussed later with "Authority Figures and Community Involvement."

Agenda. Both boards provided the audience with an agenda. The main difference between the two boards' formats was in the time slot allotted for community members to speak. The Kalamazoo Board permitted citizens to speak on non-agenda items near the beginning of each session. They were asked by the president to hold discussion

of agenda items until those particular items were discussed by the board.

The Portage Board permitted citizens to speak after "Action Items" on the agenda had been completed. This provided the board with enough time to complete a considerable amount of business before the community stated its concerns. Because of this format, the Portage Board Meetings averaged 2-2½ hours, whereas, Kalamazoo's Board Meetings lasted twice as long.

Atmosphere. The atmosphere of the two school boards was obviously different. In Kalamazoo, the meetings were quite formal: men wore ties, and rarely did the members speak to each other on a first-name basis. There was often tension created by disagreements among members. Laughter was seldom heard.

On the other hand, the Portage Board of Education appeared to be much more relaxed: the majority of men did not wear ties, and the members often addressed each other with first names. The posture of the superintendent was also relaxed: he often leaned back on his chair, very much at ease among his employers. Disagreements occurred, but rarely resulted in feelings of tension. Smiles were seen, and laughter was often heard from the members as well as the audience.

Authority Figures and Community Involvement. The seating arrangements, as previously discussed, tended to reveal much about the two school boards' philosophies regarding power and authority. Kalamazoo's center seat was occupied by the school board president; and as would be expected, all comments, opinions, and discussions were directed toward her. This board did not seem to rely on the

educational expertise of the superintendent. As a result, the members had difficulty reaching decisions. They were constantly bickering among themselves and striving to attain their personal interests and those of their constituents.

Portage's center seat was occupied by the superintendent; as a result, all comments, opinions, and discussions were directed toward him. The board consulted the superintendent constantly and relied heavily on his perception of the educational situation. Decisions were made more readily by the Portage School Board due to their complete confidence in the wisdom of their superintendent. Although Portage had been accused of being a "rubber-stamp board," the members refuted this. They openly admitted to a variety of opinions and occasional disagreements; however, they prided themselves in never leaving a meeting angry or speaking disrespectfully of one another.

Both Kalamazoo and Portage had vocal community members and teachers. However, due to demographic differences, Kalamazoo seemed to have more interest groups. One interest group represented the 30 percent minority population. Many of Kalamazoo's problems involved the federal desegregation order of 1971. The neighborhood school concept had been somewhat dissolved, thereby causing parents to feel adverse toward busing.

Portage had few minorities; therefore, its problems were different from those of Kalamazoo. There were many community members in regular attendance at the board meetings, but rarely did they speak. Most comments from the audience involved a personal or small group problem, and many times the superintendent informed the

board that he could resolve the problem at a private meeting.

### Summary

This chapter described several learning situations experienced by the intern during the summer of 1980. These experiences had not been planned; therefore, they were not contained in the prospectus. The following tasks were performed by the intern: (a) assigning students to new schools, (b) completing a fringe benefit survey, (c) recognizing office staff concerns, (d) attending grievance proceedings, (e) completing a staffing budget summary, (f) attending court hearings, and (g) comparing Kalamazoo and Portage School Boards. The next chapter will summarize and evaluate the six-week internship. Suggestions and recommendations are offered to future interns who plan to work in the central office.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

The internship experience in the Employee Services Department of Kalamazoo Public Schools was not limited to those areas listed in the prospectus. Although the department focused on classroom personnel (teachers and substitutes), it also spent a great deal of time interacting with support personnel (office and operational staff).

In regard to the prospectus, most of the conceptual, human, and technical objectives were met and terminal skills acquired. The following three terminal skills were altered because of the lack of records, need, or time.

First, due to the unavailability of historical data, the study on teacher attendance encompassed only a 9-year (instead of a 15-year) comparative study of used sick days. Second, the intern's desire to bring into perspective teachers' morale as it related to the reorganization of the schools was met with hesitation. The director initially thought that the intern could meet with the president of the Kalamazoo Education Association and develop a neutral to positive statement regarding the purpose of this study. It was believed that if teachers knew of KEA's endorsement of this study, they would be more cooperative in answering questions. However, within one week, the director decided that a study of this nature--even with the purpose of improving morale--would not be appropriate. Morale



was obviously low and to pursue morale feelings at that time was inadvisable.

Third, a lack of time and a decrease in hiring prevented the intern from demonstrating ability to choose the best person for the job. When the internship commenced, the director expected to be interviewing several bilingual teachers to fill two vacancies. Court hearings, grievances, and negotiations were some reasons for postponing those interviews to a later date.

The overall experience in Employee Services was greatly beneficial to the intern. An institution is run by people, and what better place than the personnel office could one learn about the people of the institution!

The intern would find it impossible at this time to rate one experience more valuable than another. While it is true that the intern spent more time in the areas of teacher attendance, teacher morale, substitute evaluations, and substitute handbooks, it would be incorrect to say that those experiences were more valuable. Certainly, when the intern becomes an administrator, it will be equally important to know how to interact with unions, attorneys, and school boards. It will also be valuable to know how to handle unemployment and grievances. The director taught the intern many valuable lessons, two of which seem to emerge repeatedly: (a) to anticipate questions and have the answers for these questions before approaching citizens or employees with changes, and (b) to document all verbal agreements with written notations.

The intern believes that completing an internship prior to being hired for an administrative position is as necessary as completing student teaching. The success or failure of this type of learning depends primarily on two factors: (a) the willingness of the organizational supervisor to share her/his time, knowledge, and confidences, and (b) the amount of initiative the intern is willing to put forth during the internship. Luckily, the supervisor thought of the intern as a professional, and consequently shared many of his insights and conclusions about people. The intern was permitted to accompany the supervisor to many meetings; discussions afterward were most beneficial.

Overall, the intern's experiences were valuable. They were not limited to the personnel office; however, the intern believes that an even wider variety of experiences would be possible during a six-week internship. For instance, two weeks could possibly be spent with the curriculum director or the child accounting director. However, for an in-depth study of a particular department, the intern believes six weeks to be adequate.

## APPENDIX

## A STUDY ON TEACHER ATTENDANCE IN THE KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Introduction

Public school systems--nationwide--are faced with similar problems: declining enrollment, millage defeats, teacher surplus, and decreasing state aid. These problems, coupled with double-digit inflation, union demands, and federal (also State) mandates provide a continuous challenge to public school systems: the challenge of supplying the best possible education with limited human and financial resources.

Kalamazoo Public Schools is in the process of making some major decisions regarding the future of its schools. Reductions are being made in many areas to decrease budgetary deficits. These reductions foreshadow some teacher-related problems which are not, by any means, exclusive to Kalamazoo: (a) staff morale may decrease as reductions are implemented, and (b) teacher absenteeism may increase.

The purpose of this study is to ultimately help Kalamazoo Public Schools with some of its financial problems: namely, to promote regular teacher attendance and reduce substitute teacher costs.

### Reviewing the Problem

Poor teacher attendance is not only a financial problem but also an ethical one. A school system's philosophy of education invariably focuses on the total education of the child. When her/his teacher is absent, the child's education is interrupted. Research consistently rates the educational effect a substitute has on a child much lower

than that of the regular classroom teacher (Elliott, 1979). Since substitutes rarely improve the instructional program--and in effect, may hamper progress--it is important for school systems to determine the causes for poor attendance in hopes to alleviate absenteeism and the need for substitutes.

#### Causes for Poor Attendance

Major studies of this problem have been carried out in Indiana, Illinois, California, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, and numerous specific sites (Elliott, 1979). These studies reveal several common causes for increased absenteeism.

1. Since the passage of collective bargaining legislation, teacher absenteeism has increased despite better pay, smaller classes, and more appropriate assignments. A sort of custom has arisen whereby many teachers feel it is their right to be absent for their allotted number of sick days whether they're ill or not (Bundren, 1974).

2. High absenteeism occurs in school districts where there are low levels of faculty agreement toward the goals and policies of the community and school district. These high rates of absenteeism occur even in those school districts with many material incentives and pleasant physical environment (Spuck, 1974).

3. Absenteeism flourishes where it is ignored. (No reward for coming in; no punishment for taking off.) (Hayes, 1979).

4. Reasons that teachers give for their absences involve personal illnesses or the illness of a family member. When surveyed (Capitan, 1980), many teachers admitted that their illnesses were

stress-related. Factors which cause stress and low morale include perceptions of powerlessness ("There's no sense in even talking about it. Nothing's going to change"); poor teacher/administrator relationships (lack of an administrator's desire for teacher input in decision making); role conflicts; and, lack of recognition for attendance or a job well-done.

### Symptoms of Low Morale

Every administrator must become aware of the danger signals of low morale. Unmonitored low morale will inevitably lead to poor attendance. The following is a list of familiar symptoms:

1. Teachers begin to exemplify less energy. Less time is spent at school.
2. Teachers seem to be slightly less flexible and accommodating than they were formerly (Seiderman, 1978).
3. Teachers question--possibly to the point of defiance--the goals and objectives advanced by the administrator (Cook, 1979).
4. Teachers seek to disregard, or completely ignore, the organizational and operational structure.
5. Teachers' confidence and trust in the administrator dwindle or become non-existent.
6. Teachers perceive a lack of administrative concern.

Any of the above six symptoms is easily detected. It does not take an involved questionnaire or survey to discover lack of morale. However, if a morale problem does exist, how should it be dealt with to insure against absenteeism? The next section will offer many suggestions.

### Ways to Promote and Maintain High Morale

Some of these suggestions spring from good common sense. Some have been used in business operations, but could be creatively adapted for use in education. Most are directed to building principals, as they are the people having direct contact with the employee.

1. Establish an open communication system and respond positively to staff input. Involve staff in operational problem solving. Their involvement increases the feeling that they have a personal stake in the program's success.

2. Show administrative concern. ("Nice going with that....", "Congratulations!"), "Thank you for...." When writing memos, the "I" should be avoided in favor of the "you." (Cook, 1979).

3. Boost morale by remembering teachers' birthdays with personal notes or cards.

4. Offer a change in routine. Give time off to go to workshops, conferences, and training programs. Some districts have brought in a period of jogging, yoga, meditation, or a bridge contest.

5. Combine seriousness and fun. Social activities such as parties, picnics, and potluck dinners can increase morale. (Provide teachers with the option to refuse attendance to such gatherings without feeling guilty or penalized.)

6. Provide an atmosphere of trust, respect, honesty, flexibility, and responsibility. When staff members needs are met, they are more willing to see that others' needs are met (Seiderman, 1978).

7. Provide leadership which is stimulating, open, empathic, and democratic.

8. Rotate leadership assignments at least every three years, preferably by peer election (Magoon, 1979).

9. Place the responsibility of inservice training primarily on a teacher committee.

10. Develop a cohesively working staff whereby members view coming to work to help one's co-worker as desirable; hence, job attendance is more attractive than absenteeism (Steers, 1978).

11. Show people the importance of their work. People slow down or stay at home when they feel their jobs are insignificant.

12. Let the faculty see that the positive outcomes, tied to good performance, are greater than the negative ones. They must realize that good job performance is the most attractive of all possible behaviors.

13. Actively seek employee suggestions regarding an attendance problem.

14. Establish an employee absence monitoring system (Capitan, 1980). Determine the data which would be most useful to the building administrator (day, reason, etc.). Surprisingly enough, many school systems collect these data but seldom use them to deter future absences. A school system's administration building may also consider a data collection system including the total staff absence rate by building to be computed monthly.

15. Provide some means of recognizing and rewarding regular attendance. (A simple word of acknowledgement and appreciation each quarter, or a more formal award of appreciation for good attendance could be presented at a dinner or district-wide assembly.)



16. Establish a program whereby unused sick leave can be converted to severance pay or a retirement bonus. (Caution must be exercised so that genuinely ill teachers are not encouraged to impair their health or the health of their students.) Studies show, however, that it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions about pay and absenteeism (Steers, 1978).

17. Be consistent and fair to all.

Additional suggestions for increasing morale and reducing absenteeism are available, but perhaps not feasible. For example, Plainview, Texas pays \$10 a day for each unused sick day and gives this money to employees as a Christmas bonus. An Indiana school system (as well as several private school systems) reduces absenteeism by not hiring substitutes--other teachers "fill-in" during their planning times. Some businesses have developed a lottery whereby prizes are given and bonuses paid for good attendance. Some have established a four-day work week, and still others do not even offer paid sick days.

#### Teacher Absenteeism in Battle Creek Public Schools

A recent study concerning teacher absenteeism in Battle Creek Public Schools concluded that teachers averaged 8.05 days absent a year. These absences were not only for reasons of illness, but also for attendance at conferences, funerals, personal days, etc. The teachers in Battle Creek Public Schools are given ten sick days a year with a possible accumulation of 210 days. At retirement, the teachers are paid one day's pay up to 90 days for each accumulated

sick day. Battle Creek Public Schools found that 8.05 days per teacher was a decrease from previous years, so they decided to take no action to increase attendance.

In addition to the study on teacher absenteeism, Battle Creek Public Schools collected data on non-teaching employees. They found that the secretaries were the best at attending work. The maintenance workers were the most abusive, so a clause was added to their contract adding vacation days predicated on attendance.

#### Teacher Absenteeism in Lansing Public Schools

A recent study concerning teacher absenteeism in Lansing Public Schools concluded that teachers averaged 7.2 days absent a year. Absenteeism was not found to be prevalent in any one particular building or area. It was thought that since Lansing is a college town with much mobility, first- through third-year teachers may be abusing the sick-day policy; however, this was not the case.

Lansing Public Schools does not supply an incentive in their teacher contracts of remuneration for unused sick days. It is their policy to approach an attendance problem not through punishment, but through consultation. Lansing Public Schools has found that low morale inevitably leads to absenteeism.

#### Teacher Absenteeism in Kalamazoo Public Schools

Kalamazoo Public Schools enlists a community answering service. Through the use of the phone service's records, Kalamazoo Public Schools is able to estimate the use of substitutes during the past nine years. It is important to remember that these numbers represent

how many times the service is called, not how many days the substitute 59  
worked. (For example, the need for a substitute during an employee's  
long-term illness, may only be represented by one request.) It is also  
important to note that these substitute requests are not only for  
teachers, but for teacher aides, and office staff, as well.

#### ESTIMATE OF TEACHER SUBSTITUTE SERVICE

Year	Requests for Substitutes	Number of Teachers	Substitute Requests per Teacher
1971-72	6,134	920.4	6.7
1972-73	5,733	895.5	6.4
1973-74	5,920	894.2	6.6
1974-75	4,944	904.0	5.5
1975-76	4,893	896.0	5.5
1976-77	4,542	868.8	5.2
1977-78	5,000	867.4	5.8
1978-79	6,008	884.0	6.8
1979-80	4,970	862.4	5.8

The above chart clearly shows that requests for substitutes in Kalamazoo Public Schools has averaged six per teacher during the last nine years. If these requests were met, at \$30/day, Kalamazoo Public Schools would have spent approximately \$149,988 on substitutes last year. If each teacher merely took one less sick day per year, a savings of \$25,860 could be realized. Administrators may prefer to put this large sum of money back into their school districts, instead of contributing it to the interruption of the instructional program.

Since administrators are directly involved with teacher morale and absenteeism; and, since educational and instructional data support the fact that "the involvement of the immediate supervisor is the single most critical factor to the success of any program" (Capitan, 1980); it is wise for administrators to work purposefully toward absentee reduction. One way for administrators to reduce absenteeism is to maintain a cohesive staff with high morale. Pennebaker (1969) found that when teachers perceived their principal as setting a good example by working hard her/himself, (and when teachers perceived their principal as being highly considerate), they exhibited higher morale.

P. G. Elliott of Indiana University, Northwest, quotes a recent newspaper article concerning teacher absenteeism.

Sick pay is just a benefit which, through abuse, is becoming a problem...it was never contemplated that because a person was entitled to be paid for five days illness in a given year or period, he was entitled to those days off whether ill or not. Nevertheless, a sort of custom has arisen under which many employees take those days as their right whether they are ill or not. In our view, that's morally wrong.

Further, it hurts economically....That is especially true in cases, like those of teachers, where substitutes must be hired instead of spreading the work among other employees.  
(Sick on Sick Page, 1976)

Elliott and Manlove (1979) have suggested five costs that are occurring as a result of the frequently-absented teacher.

1. Substitute teacher costs: obviously, the greatest cost burden.

2. Management costs: there is much administrative detail related to absent teachers; in addition to the clerical tasks, many principals visit a substitute's room every day.

3. Organizational costs: delays of many democratic processes due to a teacher's absence.

4. Program costs: student activities which are sponsored by teachers do not occur when the teacher assigned to them is absent.

5. Credibility costs: a teacher's poor attendance is costing her/him credibility as a responsible role model for her/his students.

Economically, teacher absenteeism is a burden. It not only costs a great deal of money, but it also demands a great deal of time. It is no wonder that school systems are forced to cut programs in an effort to budget enough money for substitutes. The problem lies in the fact that although volumes of literature address the subject of teacher absenteeism and give suggestions for curtailing it, none of the suggestions found in the literature have been used in a systematic way or over an extended period of time. In other words, everyone is talking about it, but no one is doing anything!

#### Conclusion

In comparison with other Michigan schools, Kalamazoo Public Schools appear to have a low teacher-absenteeism rate. However, this is no reason to ignore the matter entirely. It would be extremely beneficial for administrators to systematically review the attendance data of her/his staff. Next, decide who seems to be having attendance or morale problems. Meet with these people on a friendly one-to-one

basis, showing the data on file, and explaining the pattern that seems to be developing. It is important for the administrator to assure the teacher of her/his concern and desire to help break the pattern. Let the teacher know how important it is for her/him to be at school regularly--especially from an educational standpoint.

Bringing these data to the attention of a regularly-absent teacher could save a school system literally thousands of dollars. The amount of time an administrator confers with teachers who have developed a pattern of absenteeism will be time well-spent. A concerned and considerate administrator has the power not only to reduce absenteeism, but also to establish a cohesive staff with high morale--a staff willing work together and take on the challenging task of education.

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