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WORKING IT OUT: A CASE STUDY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
SCHOOL DESEGREGATION IN ONE NORTHERN CITY

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Working It Out:
A Case Study of the
Implementation of School
Desegregation in One
Northern City

by

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An Analytic Paper Presented to the Faculty
of the Graduate School of Education of Harvard University
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Abstract

Of the many federal efforts to promote social change, none has been so controversial or difficult to implement as the effort to end segregation in the nation's public schools. One consequence of the conflict which has characterized many cities as they deal with desegregation has been to direct social scientists' attention to studying the process of implementing desegregation in the local setting.

This study is within this tradition of research. The inquiry documents and analyzes one northern city's response to state efforts to implement desegregation in the local schools. In 1965, Massachusetts became the first state in the nation to mandate affirmative desegregation in the public schools of its cities and towns. In response to state pressure to address racial imbalance and racial isolation, the city of Cambridge, Massachusetts began a planning process which culminated two-and-a-half years later with the adoption of a desegregation plan developed in the political arena, equitable in remedy, and peacefully implemented.

This study documents this change process and analyzes the effects of state policy and compliance activities, local leadership, organizational capacity, and community involvement on the implementation of school desegregation in Cambridge.

The research employs a case study method. Evidence for the study was assembled during the author's period of employment with the Cambridge School Department and in subsequent field research. Using standard field procedures, the author recorded the events of the period and utilized intensive interviewing and document analysis as additional field study methods.

The major finding of the study concerns the importance of the local level in shaping the implementation of school desegregation reform. While the state played a critical role in initiating and sustaining the reform, the attainment of school desegregation in Cambridge was ultimately dependent on features of the local system. It was the local level which took up the reform idea, mobilized support to address it, and designed a desegregation policy which was both faithful to state policy objectives and responsive to other values, priorities, and concerns which the local community could legitimately assert.

Introduction

Of the many federal efforts to promote social change, none has been so controversial or so difficult to implement as the effort to end segregation in the public schools of the nation. The years following the historic Supreme Court Brown¹ decision of 1954 were marked by intense resistance to efforts of the executive branch to enforce desegregation in the southeastern United States, and as desegregation has moved north and west, opposition to this policy has intensified. Since the 1973 court ruling in Keyes vs. Denver School District No. 1,² city after city has been brought into federal court as local school systems prove unwilling or unable to resolve the issue of school desegregation in the political arena.

Why has the process of implementing school desegregation been so difficult? One consequence of the turbulent history which has characterized these efforts at social change has been to direct the attention of social scientists to studying how the process of implementing desegregation works in the local setting. Increasingly, researchers are providing detailed case studies of the implementation process in an effort to account for the variation of responses to desegregation which have occurred throughout the country.³

This essay is part of this growing body of research. The inquiry documents and analyzes one northern city's response to state efforts to implement desegregation policy in the local schools. Based on data gathered during two and a half years as a participant observer in the desegregation planning project of the Cambridge, Massachusetts school

system, I trace the story of school desegregation from the passage of the Massachusetts Imbalance Act⁴ in 1965 through to the local system's adoption of a comprehensive desegregation plan for the elementary schools. The study focuses on the dynamics of change and analyzes the process through which policy was transformed into practice at the local level.

Cambridge is an interesting site for such a study for a number of reasons. First, while few state governments have played a decisive role in pressing their local school districts to eliminate school segregation,⁵ Massachusetts, in the mid 1960's was an exception to this general pattern of minimal state leadership in the field of desegregation. In 1965, with the passage of the Racial Imbalance Act, Massachusetts became the first state in the nation to mandate an affirmative policy of desegregation in the public schools of its cities and towns. The case thus provides the opportunity to examine the influence of state educational agencies in achieving the national commitment to school desegregation. Second, unlike many other cities where a breakdown in the traditional political process brings the issue of school desegregation into the judicial arena, Cambridge's desegregation plan was developed within the political and administrative arena. Third, in contrast to some other voluntarily adopted plans,⁶ the desegregation plan which Cambridge adopted was comprehensive, long range, and equitably applied to both minority and white students. Finally, there was no organized community resistance to the issue of desegregation, and the plan was peacefully implemented with no disruption or strife in the social life of the community.

Why did the story of desegregation turn out this way? What elements

influenced the process of implementation and helped to shape its outcome? What perspective on the change process helps to illuminate the way in which policy ideas become practice in the local setting? These are the central questions this study addresses, and to explore these issues, the analysis draws on the findings from both the desegregation literature and research on the implementation of social reform.

The study of how change happens has received much attention in recent years. As federal efforts to promote social reform grew dramatically in the mid 1960's, researchers increasingly turned their attention to studying a number of programs launched during the great decade of social change.⁷ While the early research on implementation offered a variety of explanations for the often disappointing results of these efforts, the studies tended to have one element in common--namely, a view of implementation as the second step of a two stage process in which policy is first formulated at the federal level and then executed at the local level. This view of the change process stressed the importance of the federal role as the designers and overseers of policy and often portrayed the local level as, at best, a complicated obstacle course to be overcome in pursuit of national goals. The central implementation issue implicit in this model of change was one of devising the means to induce localities to conform to central policy objectives. This view of implementation is reflected in this essay on Title I.

The history of local autonomy in the area of education exacerbates the always difficult process of establishing a workable set of incentives for those at the local level to implement federal initiatives and objectives....If federal programs are to be executed within the intent and spirit of law, not only must goals be understood in some rudimentary form, but some set of rewards and

and sanctions must be available to encourage compliance and punish misuse.⁸

More recent studies have shifted away from this centrally dominated model of change to suggest a different view of implementation. This literature describes the change process as an evolutionary one where policy is created anew as actors engage in efforts to alter their world.⁹ Localities are portrayed not as the installers of federal policy, but rather as co-equal creators of change whose resources, influences, and dispositions are at least as important in devising and shaping outcomes as directives from the federal level. This view is captured in this essay on implementation research.

...it is probably inappropriate to think about the local development of federal programs as "implementation." For implementation carries the unmistakable signification of a definable thing being installed, rather than an evolutionary process. Instead one might think of federal agencies as establishing policies and programs which evolve during the course of their establishment, often changing radically and always embodying undefined as well as conflicting potentialities...The potentialities set in motion by federal action come into contact with local school organizations, and these potentialities are changed by the character of these organizations. The needs and values of those in them add, subtract, modify and invent-- all of this around the federal initiative, but often only loosely around it.¹⁰

The picture of implementation which emerges here is one of diversity, of discovering and altering the meaning of policy ideas as people seek to embody them in action.

My essay will explore this conception of change by looking closely at the process through which school desegregation reform was implemented in Cambridge. The major theme concerns the influence of local circumstances

in shaping how reform efforts turn out. I shall argue that the implementation of school desegregation in Cambridge was not the result of state efforts to translate policy into practice at the local level, but was instead the outcome of a complex and evolving process shaped over time as much by local events and circumstances as by directives and activities of the state. While state policy and the actions of state officials provided a conception of the problem to be remedied and supplied the stimulus for undertaking and continuing the reform, in both process and substance, the change effort was idiosyncratic. Its form and shape evolved as actors at the local level responded to changing circumstances--testing and discovering new constraints and new possibilities for action. If state efforts to steer and direct the reform course in Cambridge account for one important part of the story, then the local ability to improvise and sail a course through changing winds and uncharted waters explains another. This perspective on change which captures the importance of local influences and the unpredictable nature of the process is not especially compatible with more traditional views of implementation with their emphasis on devising better systems of management and control. Rather, it suggests that implementation will always be uncertain, a unique phenomenon taking its particular form and shape as policy is recreated at the local level.

The essay which follows sets out to present some evidence for this conception of implementation. The data is drawn to a large extent from my experience as a participant-observer in the Cambridge desegregation planning process. From May of 1978 through October of 1980, I was employed by the Cambridge School Department first as a consultant, then as the

assistant director of the desegregation planning project, and in January of 1980 as acting director. As a staff member of the desegregation planning project, I worked in the office of the superintendent and had the opportunity to observe, record, and act in the events of this period.

I believe that my participation in these events has enriched my account and share Mannheim's view that "participation in the social process which renders one's perspective partial and biased, also enables one to discover truth of deep human import."¹¹ While admittedly, this study cannot claim complete objectivity, I have tried to present the views of participants and to describe the main events as fairly and honestly as possible. To guard against the problems of bias which may result from my role as active participant in the social process under investigation, I have also drawn extensively on a variety of other field methods including internal document analysis¹² and intensive interviewing.¹³

This, then is the story of what I learned from observing and participating in one city's effort to implement school desegregation. To approach these issues, I have organized the analysis around the events and situations which seemed important in shaping the process of reform. In each part of the narrative, I have tried to build outward--analyzing the influence of specific factors in shaping events and assessing their significance for my view of implementation as a complex, particularistic, and evolving process.

THE CITY, THE STATE, AND SCHOOL DESEGREGATION REFORM

The March 1981 decision of the Cambridge school committee to adopt phase III of its desegregation plan marked the climax of a two and a half year change process during which the city developed a desegregation plan

that was comprehensive, rather than token or symbolic, equitable in remedy, and peacefully implemented. The story of how this happened is not a simple one. Many factors converged to form the tale--state policy, state-local interactions, local administrative and political leadership, demography and geography, unanticipated and unpredictable events--all of these were important in shaping the implementation of school desegregation in Cambridge. And it is through an exploration of these influences that the evolving story of school desegregation reform can best be understood.

The City

To those who have never been there, writes a local historian, the popular image of Cambridge, Massachusetts is of a city which breeds presidential advisors and cranky critics, where there are enough Nobel prize winners to form a baseball team with a relief pitching staff, and where all the walls are covered with ivy.¹⁴ But Cambridge's reputation as an intellectual and academic center obscures another reality, a city of remarkable ethnic, social and economic diversity.

Incorporated as a city in 1846, early Cambridge with its twelve thousand inhabitants, had the air of a quiet little Yankee village. But successive waves of immigration and growing industrialization profoundly altered the character of the city. By the turn of the century, Cambridge had become home to large numbers of European immigrants and Black Americans migrating North after the Civil War. And in 1978, many of its 102,096 residents could still be found in tight knit racial and ethnic communities which grew up as a result of these successive waves of newcomers--first Irish and Italians, then American born Blacks, and most recently

Portuguese, Greeks, Hispanics, and immigrants from the Caribbean Island.¹⁵

Although Cambridge is only 6.2 square miles in area, social, economic and racial boundaries have tended to separate sections of the city and its population. While neighborhoods are more heterogeneous than those found, for example, in neighboring Boston, there are still discernable ethnic enclaves which are perhaps the result of earlier patterns of immigrant settlement. Many long-term residents have traditionally perceived themselves as closely tied to one particular neighborhood where members of their family have been born, married and died. Other, more mobile residents, drawn to the city's academic, research, and high technology centers form a loosely knit community whose ties are social and professional rather than cultural and traditional.

These social, economic and ethnic separations in the city as a whole are also reflected in the city's public elementary school system. In 1978, the Cambridge schools enrolled a total of 9,214 students.¹⁶ The system was organized on a K-8; 9-12 basis. A new high school renovation was nearly completed, and when open, the school would serve all the city's public secondary students. The student population would be racially, ethnically and economically diverse, mirroring the diversity to be found in the city as a whole. At the elementary level, however, Cambridge had a long tradition of neighborhood schools, and the population of these sixteen schools serving 6,498 students tended to reflect the racial, ethnic and social class composition of the neighborhoods in which they were located.¹⁷ The university community was concentrated in the few elementary schools in the western section of the city, near the Harvard University campus and along the streets once known as Tory Row. The children of the Irish,

Italian and Portuguese communities attended the schools in the northern and eastern sections of the city where these ethnic groups had developed tight knit communities. While historically, there has been no inner city ghetto area, there were areas of the city where blacks were heavily concentrated. Low income housing was located in the older sections of mid-Cambridge, and it was in these neighborhoods where most of the city's minority population lived. Although black students composed only 22% of the total school population, they were increasingly concentrated in five of the district's sixteen elementary schools.¹⁸

While the early and mid-1970's saw neighboring Boston in the throes of a bitter conflict over efforts to desegregate its public schools, the issue of school desegregation was, in that period, quiescent in the city of Cambridge. The impetus for reform in Boston had come from years of pressure by local civil rights groups supported and sustained by aggressive state action. But in Cambridge, the minority community had not pressed city officials to address the growing trend of minority concentration in some of the elementary schools. In order to understand why, in the late 1970's, the issue of school desegregation came to occupy a central place on the Cambridge agenda, one must examine both the early history of the state role in the promotion of racial balance in the school districts of Massachusetts, and the changes affecting that role in the late 1970's.

The State

Constitutional responsibility for the control and operation of public education is vested in the states. However, from the time of the Brown I

decision in 1954, few state governments have played a decisive role in pressing their local school districts to eliminate school segregation.¹⁹ Massachusetts, in the mid 1960's, was an exception to this pattern. With the passage of the Racial Imbalance Act,²⁰ Massachusetts became the first state in the nation to mandate an affirmative policy of desegregation in the public schools of its cities and towns. In Governor John Volpe's remarks to the jubilant group of civil rights supporters, public officeholders, and educators gathered in the State House Hall of Flags on August 18, 1965 for the ceremonial signing of the legislation, he stressed the state's commitment to the correction of injustice and the fight for equal rights:

Today we write another page in the history of Massachusetts leadership in education with the signing of this bill guaranteeing truly equal educational opportunity to all our children. Our signing of this bill affirms our commitment to strike at the causes of prejudice at their source and our belief that a broadening social experience is fully as important a part of the educational process as the textbook.²¹

The major reform objective of the Racial Imbalance Act was:

...to encourage all school committees to adopt as educational objectives the promotion of racial balance and the correction of racial imbalance in the public schools.²²

And the law provided an operational definition of the goal it sought to promote:

Racial balance, the condition of a public school in which more than thirty percent but not more than fifty percent of the pupils attending such school are non-white.²³

While the promotion of racial balance in all the public schools was the

avowed objective of the act, the provisions of the law were principally aimed at the elimination of racial imbalance, and the legislation set forth in concise detail a definition of the condition it sought to remedy.

Racial imbalance shall be deemed to exist when the percent of non-white students in any public school is in excess of fifty percent of the total number of students in such school.²⁴

The specific features included in the bill essentially provided a scenario for its implementation phase. One provision required school committees to submit annual statistics regarding the racial composition of each school within their district. If a finding of racial imbalance was made, the board of education was to notify the local school committee which was thereupon required to submit a plan to eliminate racial imbalance within its jurisdiction. While the legislation detailed certain common desegregation practices which local educational agencies could employ, it placed major responsibility at the local level for the design and contents of the initial plan.

Other sections of the act were addressed to the enforcement authority of the state board of education. The board was to provide technical assistance to local educational agencies in the formulation and execution of plans to eliminate racial imbalance. In the event that locally initiated plans were not in compliance with the requirements of the legislation, the state board was authorized to make its own recommendations to local school committees. Another enforcement provision permitted the commissioner of education to withhold state funds from a local district which failed to make progress within a reasonable time in eliminating racial

imbalance in its schools. This was balanced by another provision designed to enhance voluntary compliance by increasing the amount of state aid for school construction and renovation when these projects would eliminate or reduce racial imbalance. Finally, in an effort to appease opponents of the bill and to dissipate political opposition during the enactment phase, the legislation included a provision prohibiting school committees from requiring the transportation of students to schools outside its jurisdiction or to schools outside the established school district if the parent or guardian filed written objections with the school committee.

The Massachusetts Racial Imbalance Act included much that was familiar in federal school desegregation law. Taken as a whole, however, it was a clean break with earlier tradition. For the act did not require proof of discriminatory intent. The mere fact of racial imbalance was sufficient to trigger its enforcement provisions. While the legislation created new power and authority at the state level, it also left an undefined area of administrative discretion, thereby delaying to the implementation phase the job of dealing with local educational agencies who were less than willing to carry out the self reform envisioned by the act.

The limitations inherent in the legislation soon became apparent. The actual power of the state board to compel prompt action on the part of local school systems was limited by the very imprecision of the act's requirements, and the state was reduced to a wait and see stance while local school districts used every means possible to evade compliance. Even the board's authority to withhold funding was undermined during early court clashes between the state and the Boston School Committee when the court

ordered that funding which had been held up by the state be restored.

Further hampering the state's enforcement efforts was the absence of adequate administrative staff.²⁵ To overcome these difficulties, the Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity was established in 1971. The primary responsibility of this bureau, lodged within the state department of education, was to oversee the implementation of the Racial Imbalance Act. With the creation of this new agency, the state began to take a more activist stance in the ongoing effort to desegregate the Boston public schools.

The turmoil in Boston over efforts to end racial imbalance eventually led to widespread political and popular resistance which culminated in May, 1974 with a vote by the Massachusetts Legislature to repeal the Racial Imbalance Act. Governor Francis Sargent vetoed this bill and instead submitted his own amendments to the act.²⁶ Although opposed by the state board of education and the N.A.A.C.P., the amendments were ultimately passed and enacted into law as Chapter 636 of the Acts of 1974, "an Act to Amend the Racial Imbalance Law."²⁷ Whereas the original act had given the state almost unlimited authority to seek the elimination of defacto segregation, the revised act provided instead a series of incentives and guarantees for local districts to undertake voluntary measures which promoted racial balance. One set of provisions authorized additional state funding for voluntary student transfers which would decrease or eliminate racial imbalance in local school systems. A second thrust of the amended act was to encourage the development of magnet schools to attract pupils on a voluntary basis through their unique or innovative programs. Additional

state aid would be provided to local systems to promote this objective.

While desegregation reform in Massachusetts had survived a major political battle, much of its forward momentum had been lost. The amended act constituted a serious constraint on the role of state officials in the promotion of school desegregation reform. With a weaker statutory base and limited jurisdiction, state officials were forced to rely on more indirect strategies to influence local practice. Nevertheless, seemingly undaunted by the limitations imposed, they continued to play an active role in seeking to eliminate racial imbalance in Boston and Springfield, the two largest cities in the Commonwealth.

In contrast to the state's forceful posture in these cities, the state's compliance and monitoring authority with respect to Cambridge appears to have been only weakly and intermittently applied. And the state's passive role was matched at the local level by a general unconcern over racial imbalance in the local school system. The nature of this state-local relationship is illustrated in the long history of their negotiations over racial imbalance at the Houghton elementary school.

Following the first state mandated racial census in 1965, the Massachusetts commissioner of education notified the mayor and the Cambridge School Committee that the board of education had made a finding of racial imbalance at the Houghton elementary school.²⁸ He requested Cambridge to file a plan with the board to eliminate this imbalance. In response, Cambridge submitted a plan which included a new open enrollment policy and a school committee decision to replace the Houghton school with a new and larger facility to be named the Martin Luther

King School.²⁹ The new school, located in a predominantly black neighborhood, was to include a redistricted area which would correct the existing condition of racial imbalance. Again in December of 1971, in response to the state racial census indicating continuing imbalance at this school, Cambridge assured the state they would take measures to correct the offending condition. A letter from the superintendent advised the state of the city's current policy and future plans to eliminate racial imbalance:

Our present practice makes it possible for non-white families living in the area to send their children to another school if space and the contract numbers permit. They do permit but parents want their children at the Houghton. It is also possible for white families living outside the district to send their children to the Houghton. Very few families have exercised this option.

District lines will be changed slightly with the Longfellow and Webster Schools. Each area will contribute to put the Houghton, soon to be the Martin Luther King, in what is described as balance.

In addition we propose to house in the new King the Academically Talented Classes and Boys' Achievement School Classes. With these changes balance should exist for the foreseeable future.³⁰

Despite these assurances to the state, by 1972, just prior to the scheduled reopening of the school, none of the promised measures had actually been undertaken. And although the new building had been constructed with additional state reimbursement on the premise that these measures would eliminate racial imbalance, state officials had responded to local inaction in only cursory fashion.³¹

This pattern of weak state leadership and only minimal local response

continued throughout the mid 1970's. As the minority population in the city of Cambridge increased during this period, so did the minority student population in other elementary schools. Early in 1976, officials at the Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity wrote to express their concern over racial imbalance at the Roberts School and requested the school committee to develop a plan to encourage voluntary transfers to eliminate racial imbalance.³² Partly in response to state pressure, Cambridge had established several magnet programs in the elementary schools with predominantly minority populations. Despite these programs, however, by 1978 these schools were at or near the point of racial imbalance.³³

In all, thirteen years had passed since the Racial Imbalance Law had been enacted. During this period state funds had been provided for the construction of a new school in Cambridge, and state resources had been applied for magnet programs in three elementary schools. Nevertheless, local action to stem the growing trend towards racial imbalance had been perfunctory, and the state had exerted neither the pressure nor the sanctions to induce local compliance. In the absence of strong external pressure and with no motivation for change at the local level, school desegregation reform, in Cambridge at least, was an issue at rest.

THE IMPETUS FOR ACTION

As the history of this early period demonstrates, the existence of the Massachusetts legislation and state guidelines and regulations were no guarantee that the reforms envisioned would be self-executing. In a certain sense, the legislation could be thought of as an object with no velocity. Like a mass at rest, it required some force to set it in motion. In the

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case of Boston, the catalyst for change had come from local minority pressure supported by strong state and federal directives to alter the status quo.

In Cambridge, however, there was no local constituency pressing for change, and state efforts to eliminate racial imbalance had been sporadic and only weakly enforced. What then were the forces which set this reform in motion? In retrospect it appears that the impetus for action came from a new set of circumstances at both the state and local level. A change in the state's posture towards Cambridge provided the stimulus for the reform idea and new concerns at the local level provided the motivation for its adoption.

State Enforcement Efforts Accelerate

The state government's ability to secure compliance with legislative objectives is in part dependent on its exercise of rewards and sanctions to influence local behavior. In the early years of its existence, the Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity had used its limited resources on enforcement efforts in Boston and Springfield. Preoccupied by events in these larger cities, state officials had not been aggressive in monitoring activities in the city of Cambridge. By 1978, however, with the issue of desegregation in Boston and Springfield in the hands of the courts, BEEO officials began to turn their attention to the smaller cities and towns of the commonwealth.³⁴ Although the scope of their power and authority to compel local school systems to racially balance their schools had been severely circumscribed, they now sought to pursue an aggressive policy of desegregation reform in Cambridge, using the power of the purse as one of their principal leverage points and means of influencing the affairs of the

local school district.

The request for magnet funding which Cambridge submitted in June of 1978 provided just such an occasion for the intervention of state officials. Although in previous years the state had authorized funding to Cambridge for these programs, this time they responded somewhat more tentatively. Withholding immediate approval of these requests, the director of the B.E.E.O. replied instead with a letter to the superintendent presenting the state's concerns;

The Chapter 636 proposals submitted by the Cambridge School Department have been reviewed by a panel composed of parents, independent professionals, Regional Education Center staff, and staff of the Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity. The review panel made a number of specific comments and recommendations for modification of the proposals.

Before we review these details with you or your staff, however, we will need to have a better understanding of how the proposed activities fit together to reduce racial imbalance and racial isolation, and therefore how they are eligible for support under Chapter 636.

We are planning to meet with you on July 20th, and hope for a full discussion of how the Cambridge School Department proposes that racial balance will be improved at the King, Tobin, Webster, and Roberts schools, and any other schools which will be affected in September or during the 1978-79 school year.³⁵

This politely phrased response to the Cambridge funding request suggested that state officials were now preparing to play a more aggressive role in their relationship with Cambridge. And their subsequent actions would bear this impression out. At the meeting of state and local administrators in mid July, state officials set forth in unequivocal terms the issues they wished Cambridge to address.³⁶ First, they were concerned that the magnet

programs they had been funding were not being utilized to promote desegregation. Their criticism centered around the absence of a coordinated strategy for publicizing and recruiting students for these programs. In their view, this lack of policy raised questions concerning the local commitment to remedying racial imbalance and racial isolation in its schools. Another concern was their perception that two of the magnet programs were actually creating separate tracks within one school building, with the magnet classes serving predominantly white students while the regular classes had a predominantly minority population. Finally, they had questions about the open enrollment policy in Cambridge. While detailed state regulations governing open enrollment had been issued to all Massachusetts cities and towns, the misuse of this policy in both Boston and Springfield had been cited as one piece of evidence against these school systems in their court desegregation cases.³⁷ For this reason, Bureau officials had requested data from Cambridge detailing the race and grade of students attending schools outside their home district, but to date, they had not received this information.

From the state's perspective, the failure of Cambridge to implement policy in compliance with existing regulations, guidelines, and program criteria indicated an unwillingness on the part of local officials to pursue the objective of racial balance. But this view of the city was based on a set of assumptions which was actually quite at odds with local reality. In the first place, state officials assumed that local administrators understood the law and the myriad of regulations governing transfers and the operation of magnet schools. In reality, however, there was no

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From the state's perspective, the failure of Cambridge to implement policy in compliance with existing regulations, guidelines, and program criteria indicated an unwillingness on the part of local officials to pursue the objective of racial balance. But this view of the city was based on a set of assumptions which was actually quite at odds with local reality. In the first place, state officials assumed that local administrators understood the law and the myriad of regulations governing transfers and the operation of magnet schools. In reality, however, there was no

one at the local level who was actually familiar with the details of the state legislation and guidelines or who had the specific responsibility for assuring their enforcement. While in theory, state officials were responsible for monitoring local operations, in practice over the years, there had been little oversight by state officials preoccupied by events in Boston and Springfield. Thus, the local system had no clear sense of exactly what rules and regulations they were responsible for enforcing.

Second, state officials assumed that in receiving magnet funding, the local system shared the primary goal of encouraging voluntary desegregation and would utilize the funding to promote this objective. From the local perspective, however, the notion of using magnet schools as a primary tool of desegregation policy was only dimly understood. In Cambridge, these programs had originated mainly in response to middle class demands for open education, and although funded by desegregation grants from the state, they continued to be thought of principally as alternatives to traditional schooling rather than vehicles for school desegregation. Finally, the director of the Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity had been with this office since its inception in 1971 and was fully familiar with the ongoing interactions between the state and the city over the course of thirteen years. In contrast, this historical perspective was not shared at the local level. The superintendent had been in Cambridge only three years. He was unaware of the file of correspondence which in the state's view constituted a written history of local noncompliance. Lacking this equivalent organizational memory, the superintendent did not see the issue of racial imbalance in Cambridge in quite the same light as state officials,

and it was hardly a pressing item on the agenda of Cambridge administrators and city officials in mid 1978.

Local Concerns

Although racial imbalance was not a central concern of the superintendent during this period, there were a number of other local problems which were preoccupying him at the time of this meeting.³⁸ To begin with,

Cambridge was facing increasingly severe fiscal problems. The spiralling costs of teachers' salaries and plant operations, coupled with growing concern about property tax rates and a threatened state cap on local spending were early warning signs of an imminent financial crisis. Another local concern was the pressing need to renovate a number of elementary school facilities. Sixteen schools organized as K-grade eight units made up the elementary school system in Cambridge. These schools differed vastly in design, age and educational program offerings. Several schools were either in a serious state of physical decay or lacking those special facilities which the newer schools contained, and three schools were being temporarily housed in rented parochial school facilities. The deteriorating conditions of some school facilities and the pressing need to update and modernize others had been discussed since the early 1970's. And while reports, recommendations and political promises about school renovations proliferated, no comprehensive facilities modernization program had actually been undertaken.

Finally, the superintendent was under private pressure from the city manager, some members of the school committee and the assistant superintendent for business to close a number of underutilized elementary schools. A gradual

decline in school enrollments over the 1970's and the need for local economies suggested that the issue of school closings would have to be faced. To deal with this potentially explosive issue, the city manager, the Cambridge school committee and the school department had commissioned an outside consulting firm to prepare a study of elementary school facilities. While the avowed purpose of the study was to generate the data on which to base a long range facilities plan, the report, it was hoped, would present a convincing argument for the need to close schools. The preliminary report was to be ready for review late in July.

The State and the Locals Reach Agreement

In the face of these concerns at the local level, how can we account for the superintendent's agreement to address a controversial issue which, in the absence of local demand, would have very little political payoff? The findings from a major piece of implementation research suggest some answers to this question. The Rand study of federally sponsored change agent projects posits that four factors interact to spur the initiation of change: the availability of a "good idea," the availability of outside funding, local needs, and the incentives of individual actors.³⁹ In the Cambridge case all of these factors were present in varying degrees.

The superintendent was anxious to assure that state funding of already existing magnet programs, supported by a politically active middle class, would be forthcoming. The state's posture seemed to imply that funding was contingent on the willingness of the local system to address the state's concerns. In addition, the school system was contemplating major renovations

of several elementary school facilities. State law provided for the reimbursement of up to seventy-five percent of the cost of renovation when those projects would reduce or eliminate racial imbalance. The prospect of additional state funding when local coffers were increasingly bare was certainly an inducement for the locals to consider the state's concerns. Another factor which influenced the calculation was the superintendent's concern about the political turmoil which might result from the proposal to close schools. From his perspective, state pressure to eliminate racial imbalance could serve both as an authoritative justification and as political protection for undertaking this unpopular measure. Finally, the superintendent wanted additional staff, accountable directly to him, to assist in accomplishing his own agenda for the elementary schools. The previous year, the BEEO had provided funding for a staff of graduate students who had assisted in planning for the newly consolidated high school. Funding had terminated in June and, although the superintendent wished to retain the staff, local funding was unavailable. Now, the state's pressure to develop a coordinated approach to eliminating racial imbalance could provide the rationale for continued funding of this staff, Project SPAN, as a planning unit attached to his office.

Thus it was, in a sense, the superintendent's own agenda which provided the logic for his actions. While state policy and the actions of state officials provided the impetus for reform, local problems and concerns provided the motivation for its adoption. If the state viewed their intervention as a means to promote school desegregation reform in Cambridge, the locals saw it as an opportunity to address other political, economic and

organizational problems which were fundamentally unrelated to issues of racial justice. From these widely divergent views of the problem to be remedied, a general and implicit agreement to address the issue of racial imbalance slowly emerged. And Cambridge was about to embark on a course of social change.

THE ISSUE OF RACIAL IMBALANCE GETS ON THE LOCAL AGENDA

State policy and the actions of state officials can influence implementation in a number of different ways. In the broadest sense, policy may influence local actions by providing a conceptualization of the policy problem and organizing local attention to the possibilities of change.⁴⁰ Second, state officials can influence local priorities by making funds available for some activities and not for others, by attaching conditions and requirements for the spending of those funds, and by exerting formal and informal pressures for certain results. On the other hand, the role of state officials is also constrained by the scope and extent of their own power to secure the desired change. In this case, BEEO officials, while committed to promoting school desegregation in Cambridge, had only limited means for securing this end. One method, however, which was clearly within the scope of their authority, was the provision of funds for the development of magnet schools. It was through this approach that the state would seek to influence the reform effort at the local level.

First Steps

Shortly after their July meeting, the director of the BEEO wrote to the

superintendent suggesting that the locals consider the development of a new magnet program in a racially isolated school.⁴¹ Their suggestion, however, was not enthusiastically received at the local level. The superintendent was not particularly interested in pursuing this strategy. He viewed magnet programs as risky ventures heavily dependent on uncertain state funding, a potential source of conflict in school-community relations, and a deflection of local energy away from his more generalized interest in upgrading the educational programs at the local schools.

The locals did, however, have their own concerns and priorities, and as they started to play a more active role in the change process they began to formulate a conception of reform which was more consonant with local needs and realities. From the superintendent's perspective, the racial balance issue could serve both as a vehicle to provide him with additional staff and as a framework for addressing the question of school facilities. These were the concerns which were reflected in his response to the state. In a series of communications over the course of the summer,⁴² he indicated his intention to address the state's concerns and requested funding for a planning staff to assist him in that effort. The principle focus of the planning staff would be:

...to assist the superintendent in developing and implementing a voluntary desegregation plan by September of 1979.⁴³

The long range plan for dealing with racial imbalance would be contingent on the data developed in the elementary school facilities study. Once this data was available, he would ask a citywide advisory committee to assist his office in developing:

a long range plan for the use of elementary school facilities which would assure future racial balance as well as quality education in the Cambridge elementary schools. ⁴⁴

Although Cambridge administrators had indicated a commitment to implementing modest desegregation measures of a voluntary nature, they had left the specific elements of their undertaking largely undefined. Nevertheless, these initial communications did provide a first statement of the change effort as it was initially envisioned at the local level. A short term objective had been formulated, a timeline established, some elements of a planning strategy devised, and the possibility of more extensive change acknowledged. Apparently satisfied that officials at the local level would address the issue of racial imbalance, the BEEC announced in late September that it would fund the requested planning unit, Project SPAN. ⁴⁵ With the allocation of funds from the state, the city's agreement to address the problem of racial imbalance in its elementary schools had been formalized.

Local Attention Shifts

The agreement to adopt a reform is, however, only the first step in a complex and uncertain process of change. Events and circumstances which are difficult to anticipate can impinge so rapidly and unpredictably on the local environment that agreements once made, with even the best of intentions, can easily give way under the weight of more immediate and urgent concerns. ⁴⁶ Local attention to any given set of issues is not constant but rather shifts in ways which are unpredictable and not easily managed. In this case, Cambridge administrators had declared their intention

to deal with the issue of racial imbalance and had taken some first steps towards addressing it. But the change process was to prove neither straightforward nor steady. Instead as the weeks following the meeting with the BEEO slipped into months, the sense of urgency which had been generated by the state's intervention would gradually diminish as other more pressing issues began to surface at the local level. The events surrounding the controversy over schools closings in Cambridge provide one illustration of the variability of local attention and the difficulty of sustaining a reform effort on course.

The School Closings Controversy

The first public indication that school closings were being considered came early in October in a letter to the local newspaper from a member of the school committee. Referring to data in the soon to be released Edcon Report, she delineated her view of the problems confronting the school system. Declining enrollments, inadequate facilities, and the need for fiscal responsibility, she wrote, meant that the time was right for the development of a sensible school closing policy.⁴⁷ Rational as her overall analysis of the situation may have been, her concluding comment pointed to a very different aspect of the local decisionmaking process. Her query, "how will the school committee be able to decide to close a school with children in it, if we can't get four votes to close one without children,"⁴⁸ clearly enough suggested the political dimension of public policymaking in Cambridge.

The following week, the report she had cited was released, and the school

committee scheduled public hearings to receive community comment on the report's recommendations to close four schools. The hearings, which took place over a period of two months in the schools which had been targeted for closing, were bitterly divisive.⁴⁹ Each community group clamored to retain its neighborhood school, insisted that quality education could not be defined in terms of facilities and emphasized the importance of the school as a community institution. For the neighborhood groups, the school represented an instrument of community cohesion, sustaining particularistic ties and reinforcing traditional values and lifestyles. And they defended their interests against the encroachment of those who wished to make decisions on technically rationalized criteria. Referring to the upcoming local elections, they intimated that this issue would ultimately be decided in the political arena.

Public confusion about the purpose and intention of the report was further compounded by the posture of school committee members at the hearings. While some committee members rejected the report's recommendations, maintaining they would never vote to close a neighborhood school, others argued that economic reality and the inadequacy of present educational facilities might dictate the need to take this unpopular action.⁵⁰ With the school committee politically divided over school closing policy, the outcome remained uncertain.

The Desegregation Staff

While the issue of school closings was dominating local attention, an important development was taking place within the school department. In

early December, the school committee approved the staff appointments for Project SPAN, the planning project to be located in the office of the superintendent. The creation of this unit would prove an important factor in the implementation of school desegregation reform in Cambridge. As a result, the issue of racial imbalance would acquire a local constituency and the school department would acquire an organizational structure responsible for managing and overseeing the implementation effort.

The two staff members of this project were graduate students and outsiders to the school system. Ideologically committed to the goal of school desegregation and uninvested in the local status quo, they were in one sense potentially strong agents for implementing change. However, as outsiders, they had little legitimacy to articulate organizational goals and very little formal authority to control the action. These factors might well have constituted serious impediments to desegregation reform, if it had not been for the interest of the director of elementary education in the planning effort.

The director of elementary education had been in the school system since 1956.⁵¹ During her twenty-two years in the school system, she had developed a broad network of support and, as an insider who was widely respected, she had the organizational position and legitimacy to confer a kind of official benediction on the planning project's undertaking. Her commitment to the goal of school desegregation and the resources and influence she could marshal, would make her a powerful ally in the effort to organize and sustain the fragile and difficult process of reform.

Intervention at the Local Level

In their study of one of the major social change efforts of the 1960's, Marris and Rein have written that the central task of reformers is to set the reform process in motion and act to keep it from coming to rest.⁵² In this instance, state officials had provided the impetus for change, but they were too far removed from the local level to sustain it in motion. It was the desegregation staff at the local level who would take up this task. Together with the director of elementary education, they were to play an important catalytic and organizing role in shaping the development of desegregation reform at the local level.

The staff took their cue for raising the issue of racial imbalance from the controversy which was brewing around the school closings. In early November, the group met to discuss their reactions to the EDCON report and to the previous months' hearings.⁵³ In their view, there were a number of problems with the approach taken in the report. First, in seeking to address the city's fiscal problems, the consultants had examined only the idea of school closings without considering other alternative means of budget savings. Second, while racial imbalance had been alluded to, there was little indication of how the report's recommendations, if implemented, would affect this issue. In addition, the report had failed to consider the placement of special education and bilingual programs which, in the staff's view, constituted important elements in the development of an overall plan for the elementary schools. Finally, the staff was distressed by the way the idea of school closings had been presented to the public. The community had no real understanding of the complexity of the issues and, now, faced with a

series of recommendations which they had had no role in developing, community opinion had coalesced around preserving the status quo. The volatility of the meetings and the veiled political threats suggested that acting on these recommendations would be an extremely difficult political task.

With these concerns in mind, they drew up a memo to present to the superintendent.⁵⁴ While the report might be a useful tool for opening a discussion, they argued, it did not address the problems of racial imbalance or the issues of bilingual education, special education or magnet programs. These were inter-related with declining enrollments and facilities use and, thus, should be taken into account in any plan for the elementary schools. Their analysis of the issues facing Cambridge, they stated, indicated the need to develop a comprehensive plan for the system rather than one exclusively focused on school closings. Finally, they proposed the idea of community participation in the development of a plan. Arguing that community support was essential for the implementation of any plan, they proposed that the superintendent form an advisory committee to study the issues and make recommendations to him. From their recommendations, his office would develop a comprehensive plan to present to the school committee.

The staff's analysis reflected an effort to impose some order and definition on an essentially ambiguous situation. Uncertain of the school committee's intentions regarding school closings, mindful of the agreement with the state to address racial imbalance, and sensitive to the community's reactions to the unexpected school closing recommendations, the staff had

responded to events by formulating a general blueprint which could serve to guide action at the local level. While their idea of a comprehensive plan was only thinly sketched out, the notion did, nonetheless, identify and define a complex set of problems and signalled an intention to approach planning in a more coordinated and responsive way. Of more immediate consequence, however, they had posed the topic of racial imbalance once again for official consideration.

Having outlined a conception of the problems to be addressed and a course of action, the planners' next step was to meet with the superintendent. Although somewhat anxious about raising the issue of racial imbalance, the superintendent, nevertheless, agreed with the analysis and suggested they meet with school committee members to present their view and to gauge official reaction.⁵⁵ Not yet committed to any course of action, the superintendent wanted to test the waters before deciding to launch this undertaking.

The Cambridge School Committee

Cambridge has a city council-manager form of governance. This system provides for a city council of nine, elected at large every two years, with the mayor selected from within its membership. The mayor presides over meetings of the council and the school committee but has no executive power. Instead, the chief executive officer of the city is the city manager, appointed by vote of the majority of the council. Under this structure of governance, stewardship of the school system is nominally in the hands of the school committee, six members elected citywide with the mayor as chairperson. The school committee appoints the superintendent who serves as the

chief administrative officer of the school system.

In theory, the school committee is responsible for setting policy for the school system and the superintendent is charged with its implementation. In practice, however, these distinctions are rarely so clear. Elected members of the school committee are limited in their capacity to shape policy for reasons which are both structural and political. On the one hand, the absence of staff, resources, time, and the expertise to do an effective job constrains their role as policymakers. On the other hand, the diverse ideological and political composition of this elected body often makes it difficult for any one group to dominate policymaking, and limits the capacity of school committee members to play a strong leadership role in establishing guidelines for the school system.

School committee members are, nevertheless, a key group in the implementation of desegregation reform. As the official policymaking body, their conduct as elected officials can either help to promote a resolution of this issue within the political arena or contribute to a breakdown of the traditional political mechanisms for problem solving.⁵⁶ When local officials are unable or unwilling to address the issue of desegregation, even the most ardently committed and politically adroit superintendent can do little to effect change.

Given the influence of these actors on the change process, the superintendent's strategy of consulting with them at an early point was to prove a politically astute move. By integrating the planning into the political environment early on, the desegregation staff would succeed in developing a broadly shared view of the problem and marshalling an effective

political coalition for action.

Raising the Issue in the Political Arena

Following up on the superintendent's recommendation, the desegregation staff and the director of elementary education began a series of meetings with the key actors in the local power structure. While the avowed purpose of these meetings was to gauge the reactions of school committee members to the idea of developing a comprehensive plan, in practice the meetings provided an occasion for the staff to raise the issue of racial imbalance and to organize official attention to the possibilities of action. In effect, they were acting as carriers of the state's message to the local arena, and in their effort to marshal support for this reform they advanced a compelling set of legal and political arguments.⁵⁷ The staff's emphasis on the city's legal obligation to undertake desegregation was bolstered by frequent references to neighboring Boston where non-compliance with state mandates had ultimately resulted in a federal court order to desegregate the city's schools. By addressing the issue of racial imbalance voluntarily, they argued, the city would retain its autonomy and could design a plan which would reflect the community's own view of an appropriate solution.

Political reaction to their proposed agenda was mixed.⁵⁸ In general, school committee members of both conservative and reform factions were concerned about the racial imbalance issue and fearful that failure to deal with it locally would render the school system vulnerable to outside intervention. While nervous about the community's reaction, they, nevertheless,

seemed willing to address the issue. Given the controversial nature of the envisioned reform and the ideological and political diversity of the school committee, this consensus might seem somewhat surprising. While it is not possible to determine precisely why school committee members agreed to this undertaking, several plausible explanations come to mind. First, the issue had arisen as the result of official intervention by the state, rather than through the demands of local civil rights groups. Thus, from the outset, it had a certain claim to legitimacy. Second, the history of decades of desegregation battles and their outcomes may have contributed to a relatively realistic view of the costs and benefits of different forms of response. Neighboring Boston had provided a dramatic example of the power of the federal court to supersede any resistance that local officials might muster. Thus, school committee members' common interest in preserving social order and maintaining local control might well have been compelling enough to allow them to reach agreement to address this issue.⁵⁹ In addition, the major actors on the school committee were basically liberal in their orientation towards civil rights and presented with this problem, were ideologically disposed to address it.⁶⁰ Finally, the measures which the staff were proposing for the first phase of the planning were modest enough in scope and thus unlikely to arouse strong community resistance.

These factors, taken together, probably account for the school committee's general agreement to address the problem of racial imbalance. However, the staff's proposal of a community planning process met with no such consensus. On this point, school committee members divided along reform/conservative lines.⁶¹ Reform members of the committee, although expressing reservations, seemed to view community participation as a necessary ritual in such an

undertaking, and they endorsed the idea. Some conservative members, on the other hand, opposed this notion, claiming it would be cumbersome, unproductive and possibly polarizing. They proposed instead that the superintendent and staff develop a plan and then submit it to the committee for review and public comment.

The outcome was, thus, ambiguous. On the one hand, a general if only implicit, agreement to address the issue of racial imbalance had emerged. On the other hand, the lack of consensus on community participation left the staff temporarily stymied in their effort to move the planning project along. Committed to a participatory planning model and convinced that the school desegregation issue could best be resolved if the community were involved from the outset, staff members continued over the next month to press their views with the superintendent and members of the school committee.

In the meantime, they began holding meetings with the masters of the elementary schools. Viewing these administrators as crucial actors, the staff sought to secure their commitment to the issue of school desegregation and to the community planning process early on. The director of elementary education, in particular, was concerned about the idea of parent participation.⁶² Cambridge schools had had a history of volatile parent-school relations and, although most professional educators in the system gave lip service to the concept of parent involvement, assuring parents' active participation in decision making areas of school policy remained an ongoing struggle. The net result of these meetings, however, was to secure overall agreement from the masters on the importance of addressing the issue and on,

the need to involve parents in order to gain support for a racial balance plan.⁶³

In all, four months had passed between the staff's first tentative response to the school closing hearings and the conclusion of this round of meetings in late February. At the outset of the planning process the staff had proposed the development of a comprehensive plan which would address school closings, school renovations, program placements, and racial imbalance. Over time, however, the focus of the planning effort had gradually shifted. As a result of the school committee's ambiguous posture on school closings and the staff's emphasis on racial imbalance, the issue of school desegregation had slowly emerged as the central item on the planning staff's agenda. Through a complex process of communication and consultation with the key actors in the local power structure, the concrete objectives of the first year's planning effort had become more explicit. The remainder of the year would be used to raise the issue of racial imbalance with the community and to implement some voluntary desegregation measures. In the following year, if these measures alone proved insufficient, the system would consider further desegregation. Possible school closings and school renovations planning would be deferred until that time and considered along with whatever additional desegregation measures might be devised.

Having outlined a set of objectives and devised a course of action, the planning staff was ready to raise the issue in the public arena. But, before proceeding, they wanted to obtain the formal sanction of the school committee. For this purpose, the staff prepared a set of guidelines for the

superintendent to submit at the school committee's March meeting.

In his presentation, the superintendent requested that the school committee "approve guidelines for the development by the Superintendent of Schools of a racial balance plan to be submitted to the School Committee by June 30, 1979, which will contain the following:

1. The theme for the citywide plan to address racial balance issues will be volunteerism.
2. That increased parent choices and a strengthening of the open enrollment policy be developed to encourage and increase the number of voluntary student transfers to improve racial balance.
3. That a priority be given to new Magnet Program Development.
4. That transportation be provided for these voluntary transfers that improve racial balance.
5. That a priority be given to the development of an information system to assist parents in selecting educational programs."⁶⁴

The guidelines for the development of the racial balance plan suggested a moderate and cautious approach, one which local officials and public opinion could easily support. And despite continued disagreement over community participation, the school committee, with little fanfare, approved the superintendent's recommendations.⁶⁵ It was March, and the issue of racial imbalance had finally secured a place on the local agenda.

In retrospect, this account of the early stages of school desegregation reform in Cambridge has an almost eerie quality of circularity. The story begins with the superintendent's proposal to develop a voluntary racial balance plan and ends with the school committee's formal sanction to do precisely what had been proposed six months before. Measured in terms of concrete results, little, it would seem, had been accomplished. Viewed

from a political and organizational perspective, however, the achievements of this period had been almost monumental. While the state had provided the theme for change, the problem at the local level had been to set the reform idea in motion. In practice, this had involved months of meetings during which the staff had touched the critical bases of the local power structure. In this process the problem had been defined, officially recognized, and a plan of action formulated. In an environment filled with multiple problems the desegregation staff had seized the initiative and, through their actions they had propelled the issue of racial imbalance to the center of the local agenda. Though far less visible than the later more public phase of policy formation, this initial stage was critical to the outcome of the planning effort. Long before school desegregation had become a topic for public debate, the basic framework for the implementation effort had been constructed and the support of key actors secured. But before the formulation of detailed policy would begin, the themes of this early process would be recapitulated in the public arena.

A RACIAL BALANCE PLAN IS ADOPTED

The school committee's formal vote to develop a voluntary racial balance plan signaled in symbolic terms at least the willingness of the political leadership to lend the positive weight of their authority to the implementation effort. However, those with the formal authority to affect policy are not the only important influence on the process of change. The community which is directly affected by these policies and programs responds to the reform idea in a variety of different ways, and these reactions, too, may shape the

implementation process dramatically. Rubin's study of desegregation in Richmond, California provides one example of the effect of community response on the desegregation undertaking.⁶⁶ In that case, strong community resistance to the school board's desegregation initiative was a major factor in the board's inability to bring about the desired change. The response of the Cambridge community, however, was to differ markedly. In this case, the participation of the community in planning for desegregation would promote community understanding and acceptance of the reform idea. In turn, this positive community climate would render the political task of implementing reform far less divisive.

Mobilizing Community Support

Early rhetoric in Cambridge had stressed the importance of community participation in the planning process. Thus shortly after the school committee's approval of the superintendent's recommendations, the desegregation staff prepared to set the process in motion. While the theme of community participation had been a central element in the staff's implementation strategy, the form that this particular planning structure would take and its essential purpose had not been resolved. Two issues remained to be clarified. Who would participate? And what would the community actually do?

Initially the staff had envisioned a structure of small working groups in each elementary school and a citywide committee composed of delegates from the individual schools. However, an unanticipated event led them to revise their original design. Having gotten wind of the planning effort

that was soon to be initiated, a group of activist parents submitted an angry response to the school committee outlining their concerns:

"Honorable School Committee Members:

We are concerned that the Cambridge School Committee and School Department do not recognize the full importance of parents:
as parents we are active teachers of our children
we are valuable resources for educational planning
we are intelligent, thinking human beings
and we are voters and taxpayers who support the schools.

We know what our lives, our children, our schools are like in a way that no statistics in the Ed Con, or any other report can describe.

Moreover our children are our hope and our future and we are committed to the development of the best possible education for them.

The way that you as the School Committee has arrived at your proposed budget cuts demonstrates your clear disregard for those most affected by the cuts. Parents, staff and students were not consulted in any planning stage. In this situation as in many others we have been forced to react at short notice in one crisis after another.

And now, though we have recently found out that the Cambridge School Committee and School Department has known since last Spring that they will submit a voluntary desegregation plan to the State this June, there has been no official word of this or of any possible parent and community participation 'til this month!

Parents working with the Parent Support and Action Center are now vitally concerned about the implication of the Guidelines for Racial Balance Planning (approved by the School Committee March 7, 1979).

For example, where is the assurance that planning groups in the elementary schools throughout the city will work in close communication and cooperation with one another? Or where is the guarantee that all Cambridge parents will receive full information of all aspects of the desegregation planning? Or where is the guarantee that there will be open and equal access for all parents to be involved in the planning process at their school?"⁶⁷

In response, the desegregation staff and the director of elementary education arranged a meeting with this group. Sympathetic to the parents' point of view,

the staff had no difficulty in responding to their concerns. The issue of participation was settled simply. All meetings would be open to the public, and parents would be advised in writing of the time and place of each meeting.⁶⁸ In this almost haphazard way, a planning process open to all who wished to participate had been fashioned.

While the planning process in terms of participation was open-ended, the role of the committees and the activities they would engage in were clearly set forth. The planning document approved by the school committee had focused on the development of voluntary measures to improve racial balance. In the context of these guidelines, the role of the advisory committees was threefold: to recommend changes in the current open enrollment policy to enhance its effectiveness as a desegregation tool, to determine what types of educational programs should be developed to encourage parents to choose out of district schools, and to detail the types of parent, student and staff activities which should be undertaken to prepare for desegregation.⁶⁹ To assure that the objectives of the planning process were met, the staff would develop a series of working papers on each of these points. These papers would serve as the focus for community discussions and from the recommendations received, the staff would put together a racial balance plan which both the school committee and the state could accept.

Once the structure and purpose of the community planning effort had been formulated, letters were mailed out to all parents with children in the elementary schools inviting their participation in the development of a voluntary racial balance plan.⁷⁰ Racial Balance Advisory Committees were

formed in each of the schools and a series of community meetings began in early April. In the course of these meetings over a period of three months, two distinct phases are discernable. Initial activities appear to have been aimed at establishing the legitimacy of the reform undertaking. Gradually, as the process evolved, the focus of the meetings shifted from an emphasis on the legal rationale for desegregation to an active community effort to devise and design local solutions to the problems of racial imbalance.

The agendas and minutes of the early community meetings provide evidence that the staff's initial concern was to establish an authoritative rationale for undertaking a potentially unpopular course of action.⁷¹ Thus, for example, at the introductory citywide meetings, the staff presented detailed discussions of the state legislation and the history of state involvement with the city. They justified the city's development of a racial balance plan as a necessary response to the state's intervention. The turbulent history of school desegregation in Boston and the ultimate imposition of an unpopular court ordered solution provided ample proof of the power of outside authorities to impose their will and served as an incentive for the community to resolve this issue in the local arena. The legislation and the implicit threat of state action were potent political symbols, and while many may have disagreed with the intent of the legislation, no one seriously challenged its legitimacy.

Opposition, however, soon arose over other issues.⁷² Some parents were sharply critical of the law's focus on percentages. This concern with racial balancing, they claimed, embodied a rigid approach to the issue of

equal educational opportunity. The drive for equality should focus on providing quality education, rather than shifting children to achieve a statistical standard dictated by law. Other parents voiced their concern that the voluntary measures outlined in the guidelines would not achieve racial balance and were only a first step to forced busing. Another group who had long advocated an increased role for parents in the schools seized on the desegregation issue as a platform for community organizing. They maintained that school department officials were withholding information and cynically using parents for the purpose of public relations. Critical of the planning process which they described as citizen manipulation, they advocated that parents be given decisionmaking powers in the development of the plan.

While the community response focused on themes such as quality education and citizen control, the staff emphasized statistical racial balance and continued to insist that the state's legal definition of the problem provide the operational criteria for the design of policy. Although many concerns were expressed and antagonism at these meetings was sometimes high, they produced little in the way of organized opposition to desegregation. The frustration and anger of the community were directed instead at absent state department officials whose ambiguous posture vis a vis their intentions served as a constant reminder of possible judicial action, or at school department officials whose highly orchestrated planning process and directions to the committees provided a focus for community dissent.

By late April, the focus of the community planning process began to

shift. The legislation had served as an important factor in promoting community acceptance of the reform idea, and in the remaining two months the groups engaged in a series of concrete and specific activities aimed at translating the reform idea into practice. The advisory committees surveyed their communities to determine what educational programs parents preferred and studied the open enrollment policy to determine what changes were required. They also made recommendations regarding staff training and indicated the need to develop an adequate communications system to provide parents with information about the programs and policies of the school department. Towards the end of May, the committees produced a series of extensive recommendations for the superintendent's review.⁷³

A Racial Balance Plan Emerges

Using these recommendations, the desegregation staff formulated a two-part racial balance plan to be submitted to the school committee.⁷⁴ The first part of the plan consisted of a series of short range measures to be implemented upon adoption of the plan. The principal desegregation device was a new open enrollment policy. Under the terms of this policy, parents' requests to transfer their children to out of district schools would be granted if the transfer had a positive affect on the racial composition of both the sending and receiving school. Preference for available spaces was to be given to minority students wishing to attend predominantly white schools and white students seeking places at predominantly minority schools. Transportation was to be provided by the school department. The policy was to be widely publicized, so that all parents were advised of the right to

transfer under the new policy. Another recommendation provided for staff training to assist teachers in meeting the educational needs of a more diverse student population. Other measures were aimed at making information about the schools more accessible to parents. Parent information packets were to be prepared, a newsletter published and funding to establish a parent information center identified.

The second part of the plan consisted of a series of recommendations which taken together authorized the racial balance advisory committees and the superintendent in the coming year to develop a plan to assure a stable long range solution to racial imbalance and racial isolation in the Cambridge public schools. The measures to be reviewed included magnet school development, redistricting, grade re-organization, facilities renovations and school closings. The long range plan was to be submitted to the school committee by March of the following year. While these recommendations got little attention from either the media or the school committee, they were in reality the most significant aspect of the plan. The effect of these recommendations was to secure a public commitment from the school committee to continue to seek a resolution to the desegregation issue.

The School Committee Acts

By a vote of 7-0 at the last meeting of the school year, the Cambridge School Committee approved the voluntary desegregation plan submitted by the superintendent.⁷⁵ While the plan itself hardly represented a transformation in the structure of schooling, its acceptance was, nonetheless, a significant

enough event to cause the Massachusetts commissioner of education to praise Cambridge for "setting an example for other cities in Massachusetts that should be moving in the same direction and have not."⁷⁶

More significant than these congratulatory headlines in the press, however, were the words of the Cambridge Chronicle editorial writer. While congratulating school committee members, school department personnel and parents for "grappling with a sensitive controversial issue before it became too hot to handle"⁷⁷ she, nevertheless, warned that the city should not complacently think the problem had disappeared. Her prophetic words were a signal for the major effort that was yet to come.

The school year had ended, and the school committee had approved a racial balance plan for the city's schools. Judged by the actual amount of desegregation that would be achieved, the results of the first year's planning effort were hardly monumental. Seen in a different light, however, the year's work had produced a significant change. What had begun as a preoccupation of state officials had slowly evolved into a central issue on the local agenda. The process through which the problem of racial imbalance had been recognized, support to address it mobilized, a community planning process set in place and some concrete measures implemented constituted the first phase of social reform in Cambridge. The search for solutions would be the central work of the next year of planning.

THE STAGE IS SET FOR THE SECOND YEAR OF PLANNING

The school committee's adoption of the racial balance plan marked a high point in the process of reform. New policies had been designed, and the locals were committed to implementing them in the coming year. In addition,

the plan had identified a series of issues which remained to be considered. Nevertheless, the idea that the system would automatically sustain the change effort could not simply be taken as given. Rather, the culmination of this first stage of reform was to signal yet a new phase in an ongoing and unpredictable process of change. In this process, the school committee's racial balance plan which was, in reality, only a broad statement of intentions would be developed and transformed as a new series of actions and circumstances created a new climate for change.

The State Assesses the Implementation Effort

One factor which was to influence the reform course was the BEEO's response to the local plan. While the commissioner of education was publicly praising the city for its accomplishments, his administrative staff at the BEEO were privately pressuring local officials for still more dramatic results. In a long memo to the superintendent, the director of the BEEO indicated his disappointment with the local implementation effort:

In view of the past practices which have resulted in racial imbalance and near imbalance at four schools, we are disappointed not to see more vigorous efforts to reduce imbalance and isolation by September 1979. We have urged such measures consistently. For example, my letter of March 1976 urged the creation of magnet schools to encourage the transfer of both white and non-white students on a voluntary basis. Again, my letter of August 4, 1978 and...of August 16, 1978 urged the creation of a magnet school in a facility with a predominantly white enrollment, so that non-white students would be encouraged to use their right of transfer.

It is obvious that one way to reduce this imbalance and isolation would be to rescind the transfers which have occurred over the past several years contrary to School Committee Policy. This would be a hardship to the students and their parents, who were presumably not aware that their transfers should not have been allowed.

It is for this reason that we have encouraged alternative measures which would correct, on a voluntary basis, the problems which have been created by transfers allowed contrary to the Open Enrollment Policy. We are disappointed that...the Plan postpones into next year even preliminary proposals for additional magnet schools, with implementation in September 1980.

Specifically, we are not prepared to recommend funding under Chapter 636 for the present magnet schools and programs except to the extent that this funding will have a demonstrably positive effect on desegregation.

In the respects outlined above, the Racial Balance Plan falls short of the requirements of the Racial Imbalance Law, of the regulations sent you in 1976,...and of our advice to you and your staff over the course of the past year.⁷⁸

The View from Below

In fact, the idea that Cambridge would contemplate more far reaching reform had been explicitly enough stated in their racial balance plan. The desegregation staff had been a key group in the first year's effort, and their perceptions of the process differed markedly from those of the state. From their response to the BEEO's critique, it is clear that the locals viewed the state as too removed from the local level to appreciate the complexity of change or the necessity of taking political factors into account in launching this undertaking. In a long preface to their proposal requesting continued state funding for the planning project, they presented their own view of the implementation effort:

In reviewing Project SPAN's first year of operation to assist Cambridge to develop a voluntary racial balance plan, several points need to be clarified....The plan is in two parts.... In brief, part one brings Cambridge into compliance with the laws governing racial balance in the schools of the Commonwealth and provides for a policy of controlled transfers which is in line with state department of education guidelines. Part two of the plan can be thought of as a blueprint which indicates those

issues which Cambridge should consider in order to achieve a stable long range solution to the problem of racial imbalance. These issues include redistricting, facilities renovations, facilities use, development of magnet schools, and placement of atypical programs.⁷⁹

ring specifically to the state's concerns, local officials presented
rationale for the limited accomplishments:

1. We need time to measure the extent and impact of the new controlled transfer policy as a tool for voluntary racial balance. By the 11th school day of September, we will be able to make a preliminary assessment of the effectiveness of voluntary transfer policies as a measure to achieve racial balance. This will assist us in determining what other measures need to be taken.
2. New magnet schools were not planned this year because we lacked real information about what type of educational programs would be attractive enough to parents to motivate them to select an out-of-district placement for their child. One of the most exciting projects that the Racial Balance Advisory committees undertook this year was to collect precisely the sort of information which will be useful in the development of new programs and projects...
3. Project SPAN impact this year was severely impeded by the need to correct past policies and practices which unwittingly contributed to racial isolation and imbalance in the system. Putting new policies and procedures in place in a complex bureaucratic organization is not an easy feat, and this was a much more laborious and time consuming taskthan originally envisioned. In addition, the lack of a coherent data base...meant that Project SPAN had to develop this data from scratch and then systematize it....
4. The timetable of the plan was extended in part by the participatory planning model which the project utilized. It is common wisdom that organizational decisionmaking becomes more complex in direct proportion to the number of actors involved in the decisionmaking process. However, because it was clear that the issue of racial balance would ultimately affect all Cambridge elementary schools, we sought to involve all the schools at the outset of the planning process. This planning model simply takes more time than a highly centralized technocratic planning model. Nevertheless, given the nature of the social policy we are attempting to implement, we felt that in the long run, the participation of the public in the design of the plan would be a critical variable in its ultimate successful implementation. 80

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Not only did the locals have their own view of what had already transpired, but they also had their own vision of how the reform process should develop. As they described it, the principle objective would be "to assist the superintendent to implement by September 1980 or sooner, a stable long range solution to the problem of racial imbalance in Cambridge."⁸¹ And they went on to elaborate some of the specifics of this process:

In order to accomplish this objective, Project SPAN will ask the Racial Balance Advisory Committees in each of the elementary schools to consider a number of options with a view to determining which measure or combination of measures is most likely to assure the long range racial balance of their school. Among the measures to be considered are: redistricting, pairing, grade re-organization, magnet school development, facilities renovations, and facilities use. The outcome of this process should be an individual racial balance plan for each elementary school, developed by the Racial Balance Advisory Committee of that school and tailored to meet each school's particular situation.⁸²

While it is clear that the desegregation staff was committed to implementing comprehensive desegregation reform in the Cambridge schools, it was not at all clear that either the central administration or the school committee shared a similar conception of the staff's organizational mission. Thus far, addressing the issue of racial imbalance had been justified on legal grounds, but the question of what local officials were legally required to do was itself ambiguous. Although the accumulation of twenty-five years of federal litigation and the uncertainty of federal intervention combined to lend a certain legitimacy to the idea that the problem of racial imbalance required a more dramatic solution, the actors at the local level had no real way of knowing the actual boundaries of the state's power to secure more comprehensive reform. In this great grey terrain of uncertainty, the forward march of desegregation reform may well have come to a halt, if it

had not been for another intervention by the state.

The State Negotiates

If the reformers at the local level required some external stimulus to sanction their effort, state officials were again to provide the impetus for change. In the previous year, Cambridge had submitted a proposal for the renovation of a small elementary school. For years, the community had actively sought this renovation, and they were now awaiting the state's response. In order to receive state funding for renovations, however, local plans had to be reviewed by the BEEO to assure that they complied with the provisions of the Massachusetts Racial Imbalance Act. It was through this requirement that the BEEO now sought to assure that the issue of racial balance would remain on the Cambridge agenda.

The BEEO's response to the renovation request was a flat out rejection of the project as proposed. As explained in a memo to the superintendent:

The Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity has reviewed the Educational Specifications for the renovation project and at this time is unable to recommend the project for additional racial balance funding.

The specifications do not provide sufficient data on the impact such a project will have on eliminating and/or preventing racial imbalance in the Cambridge Public Schools. Who will attend the school given its increase in capacity? Where will these students be drawn from, and what effect will their reassignment have on their present school? Will district lines be redrawn? And how does this project fit into the racial balance objectives of the School Committee?

In order for us to proceed we will need specific answers to these fundamental questions.

Best wishes. 83

This response suggested clearly enough that the approval for this renovation would not be easily forthcoming. If the local school system wanted state funding to renovate its elementary schools, it was clearly going to have to undertake something more dramatic than an open enrollment plan.

As the superintendent worried about the political fallout that could result from escalating the desegregation effort, the planning staff began to collect statistics on the effects of the first year of the plan. From the data, it was clear that the effect of open enrollment and magnet transfers had not been significant. Although some three hundred and eighty-one students had taken advantage of the new measures to attend schools outside their home district, the transfers had done little to alter the overall racial composition of the school system and five of the sixteen elementary schools were still close to racial imbalance.⁸⁴ To the staff, the implications of the data were clear. Voluntary measures alone would not suffice to achieve desegregation. If the school system were committed to eliminating racial imbalance, a more comprehensive remedy would have to be designed.

Local Elections

During this same period, a local drama was being enacted which would also influence the implementation effort. Politicians were actively campaigning for the upcoming municipal elections. Because the racial balance plan had involved only voluntary transfers, school desegregation was not a major issue in the campaigns. However, black candidates for the school committee were vocal on another topic of race relations. Angry about the high school reorganization which had involved the removal of a black

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headmaster and disturbed at the school committee's failure to appoint blacks to key positions in the new administrative structure, they charged the school committee with a history of minority hiring practices which had effectively excluded the black community from representation in the school system.⁸⁵ Campaigning on a platform of affirmative action, a black candidate won a seat on the new school committee, and three other liberal candidates were re-elected. Now, with a clear liberal majority on the school committee, the political climate seemed propitious, and the desegregation staff prepared to gear up the planning effort.

By mid-November, the stage had been set. The rhetoric and actions of state officials had provided the stimulus for continuing on a controversial course. Local elections had resulted in a political climate that seemed favorable to the reform undertaking. Through administrative action, the objectives of policy had been shaped. Now, the hard task of formulating solutions would begin.

PROBLEM SOLVING AS SOCIAL LEARNING

In the joint search for solutions which would begin in earnest in late October, a gradual process of social learning would take place. While the legislation would provide the central themes, the process of planning was, in reality, an open-ended one shifting its focus from one alternative to another as the limitations and drawbacks of each proposal were revealed. As the locals engaged in the active process of problem solving, initial ideas about the reform would change. As actors at the local level learned from their experience what was feasible, desirable and operational, they

would begin to form and shape a school desegregation design which was uniquely their own.

Developing Policy

This process began in mid October when the first citywide Racial Balance and Educational Planning meeting was held in the cafeteria of the high school. While the legislation provided the outlines for policy, the locals began their planning by incorporating some elements which were, in actuality, purely local themes. In their presentations to the community, the desegregation staff stressed two features which should be reflected in the final desegregation design.⁸⁶ The plan should address racial isolation as well as racial imbalance and the burden of change should be equitably distributed among students of different racial and ethnic groups. Although these standards were to guide the planning effort, they were not, in fact, requirements of state policy. Rather, they were elements which the staff had simply incorporated into the overall framework for planning.

At the outset, the staff suggested that each school develop a plan tailored to meet its own individual circumstances. Assuming that the schools each had their own starting conditions and special problems, they proposed that the committees study a variety of desegregation measures to determine which option or combination of options would provide the best solution to racial imbalance and racial isolation.⁸⁷ These measures varied in the degree to which they implied a change in the present structure of schooling. At one end of the spectrum were relatively simple measures like redistricting, which, by altering neighborhood school boundaries would achieve a more diverse

student population within each school. At the other end, were measures requiring a dramatic alteration in the present K-8 grade structure. Two neighboring schools would be merged, with younger students attending one school and older students attending the other school. The advisory committees were asked to study a variety of such measures to determine which option or combination of options they preferred. City wide meetings would be held monthly to assure that the planning effort maintained a coordinated systemwide perspective.

A month later, following a number of meetings at the individual schools during which the desegregation measures had been widely discussed, the committees met together to review their progress. From their reports it seems clear that initially, at least, local actors viewed the desegregation planning as an opportunity to address individual school problems rather than as a means to resolve the issue of racial imbalance. In fact their suggestions were less a design for desegregation reform than a collection of ideas which reflected their own needs and priorities. Thus, for example, one school with a declining enrollment made two suggestions which would have the effect of increasing their student population, rendering them less vulnerable to the possibility of their school closing. While not explicitly acknowledging this agenda, they reported this consensus:

The racial Imbalance and Planning Advisory Committee of the School on examining the statistics provided feel that their school is one of the best balanced schools in Cambridge.

The short and long range plans of the...School are to maintain both the balance of the...School and also contribute to the balance of the Tobin School by the following options:

1. Establish an extended-day Kindergarten at the...School.

2. Redistrict the...School by restoring Walden Square Apartments to the...School District where it originally belonged.⁸⁸

A second group which had long lobbied the local political community to renovate their facility seized on the racial balance planning as a means for accomplishing this objective. As they wrote,

The only real possibility...seems to be to become a magnet school through renovation, and through program development.

The possibility of moving the 7th and 8th grades to another school has been mentioned but is so far not a popular option.⁸⁹

Again, another school saw desegregation as an opportunity to accomplish a much desired change that suited their own community's needs. And they reported the following results of their discussion.

After an excellent meeting with a free and very open discussion amongst our Racial Balance Committee, it was the unanimous consent of the group that the option, School Renovations Using Magnet Funds, be the measure that the...community pursues to provide us with the facility to present an educational program that would attract minorities.

We have great faith in our educational philosophy, goals and programs. We also maintain that given a comparable facility our educational structure would attract minorities.⁹⁰

As the groups discussed the reports and studied the data, it gradually became clear that the changes they were considering would do little to alter the status quo. Recognizing that the resolution of the racial imbalance issue had systemwide implications, and realizing that the schools could not formulate solutions independent of each other, the community proposed that a citywide task force be formed. The task force would look at the school system as a whole and generate a set of tentative suggestions for the

community's consideration.

As one racial balance committee explained this shift in strategy:

...a city-wide meeting was held in which it became clear that the individual schools could not continue to plan independently, because it was impossible to know how each school's plan would affect the whole city.

A city-wide task force was created to design a tentative, city-wide set of ideas which would outline for each school what its options are. We agreed immediately that it doesn't make sense to choose one option for all schools and apply it across the board (e.g., redistricting for all schools, or magnet schools throughout the city, or pairing schools throughout the city, etc.). Rather, it makes sense to look at the different neighborhoods in the city and figure out which options could be used by those schools. The aim is to create a plan which will equitably distribute the burdens and create racial balance with the least amount of disruption.⁹¹

When the task force had completed its work, the recommendations were distributed to all the schools.⁹² Until that point, the issue of racial imbalance had seemed somewhat abstract. Now, with concrete recommendations involving specific changes in front of them, the community began to understand the implications of the planning venture they had embarked on.

From the task force suggestions it was clear that the conception of change which was slowly crystallizing would involve a significant alteration in the status quo. For example, among the suggestions offered to each school were the following:

Webster

At present, the Webster is racially imbalanced. In discussing ways to eliminate racial imbalance, the Task Force considered redistricting and relocation of programs. In addition, #3 was directed to the issue of equalizing access to facilities resources.

1. Discuss placement of Haitian bilingual program
2. Minor two-way redistricting with Morse:
 - a. Speridakis Terrace
 - b. Other streets bordering Webster and Morse
 - c. 808 and 812 Memorial Drive
3. Move the seventh and eighth grades to Morse

Morse

The Morse school is presently balanced. In these suggestions the Task Force considered ways in which the Morse could contribute to the desegregation effort in the context of an overall plan.

1. Redistricting with Webster
2. Receiving seventh and eighth grades from Webster
3. Morse as a magnet school (with an emphasis on mathematics)

Peabody

The Peabody is an isolated school which is presently operating at capacity. In discussing ways to reduce isolation, the Task Force considered redistricting, reassignment of grades, and renovation. The thrust behind these suggestions was to create space for minority transfers which will benefit racial balance since the Mass. Racial Imbalance Act requires all such transfers to be accommodated.

1. Expansion through renovation to increase space for minority transfers.
2. Movement of the Academically Talented (A.T.) Program to another school.
3. In two parts:
 - A. Placement of 7th and 8th grades at Tobin and with this space.
 - B. Redistricting some of Tobin to Peabody.
4. Two-way redistricting with Tobin.
5. K-2 of Peabody moved to Lincoln with the intention of sharing this Lincoln space to create a "Lincoln-Peabody annex" and redistricting of Tobin to Peabody.⁹³

While the community was studying these recommendations, members of the school committee and the city council also received copies. In the meantime, the superintendent, fearing a political uproar over the changes proposed, met with the desegregation staff to outline a strategy for community outreach in the coming months of planning.

Until that point, as a local newspaper had observed, the superintendent had "kept a low profile on the desegregation issue."⁹⁴ Now, he announced his intention to play an active role, remarking, "if anybody has any feelings that the superintendent is hesitant or laying back on the issue of desegregation, they should keep an eye on him over the next year."⁹⁵ Following up on his strategy of community outreach, he intended to hold four widely publicized meetings to increase public awareness of the desegregation planning underway and to invite broader participation in the effort.

A Local Crisis

However, in an ironic twist of fate, on the very day that the first of these meetings was to be held a high school student was killed and another wounded in a knife fight between black and white students at the high school. In the aftermath of the stabbing public officials and community leaders, fearful of a confrontation between black and white parents, held separate meetings throughout the city to calm tensions and pull the community together. Now with the high school closed and parents voicing their reactions and fears; the uneasy nature of race relations in this seemingly tranquil city had surfaced and become a subject for public discussion.

After a week of meetings and pleas to refrain from further violence, the emotional climate was defused, and, with the help of clergy from all over the city the high school was reopened. If there was one theme which had emerged over the week, it was the need for more inter-racial contact among students at an early age. Representatives of the Black Student Union and white students from East Cambridge had pointedly called for grammar school programs

which would explicitly deal with racial issues.⁹⁶ The superintendent himself believed that the racial tensions at the high school stemmed in part from that fact that some students in Cambridge had little contact with youngsters of another race until they entered high school. In his view, one moral which could be drawn from the tragic death was the need to break down the racial isolation at the elementary level.⁹⁷

Drafting Solutions

The death at the high school had illuminated in poignantly human terms something of the larger meaning which lay behind the quest for racially balanced schools, and when the committees reconvened in mid-January they took up the task of planning with a heightened sense of urgency. The citywide task force had provided each school with several specific recommendations for discussion. While these suggestions would ultimately prove only a starting point in the development of policy, the exercise of working these concepts through had significant consequences. As the community and the staff studied these recommendations, a growing sense of the complexity of the issues emerged. Some of the recommendations which in theory had seemed like feasible solutions were later discredited when statistical analysis indicated that they would in fact do little to improve racial balance.⁹⁸ Other recommendations, while viable as desegregation measures, were vigorously debated on educational grounds.

In the course of the debate over the next few months, initial ideas were put aside, and community groups began to study other more sweeping measures. Some groups were now discussing the idea of two-way redistricting with neighboring schools. Another committee put forward a design for

co-operative schools. As they described it:

The Committee would like to expand on the suggestion made at the February 7 meeting with regard to possible "pairing" of schools.

We suggest that this be called "Cooperative Schools" since we feel that the term is not only more acceptable to the community, it also reflects the philosophy involved....

Utilizing the blending of neighboring school districts has many advantages. Some of these are: (1) the community remains, for all intents and purposes, intact and the children are still going to school in a relatively familiar area; (2) kindergartens can stay in their respective neighborhood schools to accommodate the morning-afternoon schedules; (3) teachers would stay with their grades and children would not lose "familiar" faces altogether--and neither will the parents; (4) masters would stay at their individual schools, and the budgets for each school would blend, but the total budget would remain virtually unchanged; (5) 8th graders, having already adapted to a community mix on a small scale, will find it easier to adapt to the larger community mix at the high school.

It is suggested that the splitting of grades between the two schools should be decided by the schools involved. This decision should be made by a group from each school consisting of the masters, teachers, and several parents. Criteria used in reaching this decision should include the facilities in existence at each school, and the use of those facilities by respective grades, as well as the relative size of each school.⁹⁹

Each of the proposals was evaluated from many angles during the months of discussions. As the community and the staff came to grips with the difficult questions and conflicts embodied in these solutions, a gradual transformation was taking place. Ideas which only months before had seemed unmentionable, unfeasible, or impolitic were now being seriously discussed and debated in the public arena. As the time neared for the preparation of the superintendent's draft plans, the committees submitted their final comments and recommendations.¹⁰⁰ Based on the discussions which had taken place over the previous five months, the desegregation staff prepared three

alternative racial balance plans for the city's elementary schools.

Three Plans Unveiled

In mid-March, the plans were unveiled before a meeting of the Citywide Advisory Committee with more than six hundred people gathered to hear the proposals.¹⁰¹ Essentially, the plans presented two different approaches to achieving racial balance. Under Plans A and C, as they were designated, neighborhood school boundaries would be redrawn in September of 1980 shifting school lines for approximately 1,000 of the students currently enrolled in the elementary schools. In the second year, the city would be divided into four educational zones, thus phasing out neighborhood school districts and replacing them with larger community districts. Unlike neighboring Boston where school attendance districts encompassed wide geographic areas, the Cambridge plan sought to retain some concept of community by creating educational zones comprised of contiguous school districts. Students entering the school system for the first time would be assigned to a school within their zone. As conceived, the plan provided some parent choice by accommodating requested assignments which fell within racial balance guidelines. An additional feature of the plan was that each school could develop specific educational options and programs to be offered to parents within each zone, thereby encouraging voluntary pupil assignments.

A different approach to desegregation was presented in Plan B. Two contiguous school districts would merge with younger students from both districts attending one primary school and older students attending middle school. All newly entering students would be assigned to the appropriate school for their grade level. Because this proposal required a dramatic

alteration in the present K-8 grade structure and involved the greatest shifting of students and staff, it was to be implemented following a year of educational planning. The community was asked to study the proposals over the next six weeks, and, after receiving the community's reactions, the superintendent would present his final recommendation to the school committee.

Evaluating the Plans

The plans which the superintendent had proposed, in principle, represented alternative means to achieving the goal of a racially and ethnically diverse school system. In practice, however, the differences embodied in these approaches were not inconsequential and, as the community discussed the implications of these policies a wide range of views emerged.¹⁰² Different groups seized on specific features of the plans and for every positive reaction to one concept, an opposing negative view was also expressed. Thus, for example, the pairing approach appealed to some parents because the burden of remedy was equally distributed, a sense of community maintained and uncertainty about school assignments eliminated. These views were reflected in comments such as these:

Parents would know ahead of time which school pair their children would go to. Parents could focus on a particular school pair (for children); fairer...to all children; Has real potential for educational improvements; All the children in a neighborhood would stay together (for community); neighborhoods would remain somewhat intact, only larger.¹⁰³

If many parents were supportive of the pairing concept, there were others who disliked it for a variety of reasons. Some parents worried about the creation of middle schools and the problem of concentrating large numbers of

adolescents in one building. These parents argued that the K-8 structure was "one of the great strengths of the Cambridge schools, providing stability, continuity and security for the children of the city."¹⁰⁴ Other parents were concerned about the disruption such a plan entailed, and the large number of students who would have to be transported to school. Cost, transportation and safety were, in their view, major problems with this approach. Teachers and administrators pointed to the problems of merging schools with different educational philosophies, and they also raised questions about contract fights of staff under such a merger.

The educational zones approach also inspired a variety of responses.¹⁰⁵ Some parents were critical of the concept because the burden of remedying segregation would fall on selected individuals and neighborhoods rather than on the city as a whole. Another equity concern was the issue of students who had open-enrolled years ago into schools which were now being redistricted. If equity were truly an issue, parents argued, these students should be returned to their home schools. Some parents in the black community seized on still another element of the plan. Citing the large number of minority students from one public housing project who had been earmarked for reassignment, they argued that the number of students and the selection of public housing for redistricting were inequitable and stigmatizing. They also voiced their fear of sending their children into what they perceived as a hostile neighborhood and demanded that the issue of security and protection for transported students be openly debated.

Other parents liked the zone concept because they perceived it as less disruptive to individual families and communities. As one group wrote:

Families would be placed in the same school. There is less need for transportation....Older children will be able to help their younger siblings. There is more family stability. There will be less busing, less disturbance with construction. The community will be able to have their children in the same area. 106

For still another group, the goal of stable, long range racial balance provided the most compelling rationale for selecting Plan C.

We think that Plan C will bring the best racial balance to the system and so recommend it. Plan B does not have the wide population base as the zone plan and the lower schools would be imbalanced by 1984 when the total lower grades population will be over 50% minority. 107

One group of parents, dissatisfied with all the proposals, chose to submit still another plan for consideration. 108 In design, their proposal resembled the educational zones concept. However, there was one major difference. Under Plan D, as it was labelled, no students presently enrolled in the school system would be reassigned. Racial balance would be achieved "in a period of two years by careful assignment of the classroom spaces created through normal turnover. 109

These examples suggest both the diversity of reactions and the degree of genuine and serious debate which took place in this period. The costs and benefits of each approach did not easily lend themselves to rational analysis, and the ongoing discussions laid bare the dilemma of seeking goals which were multiple, conflicting and ultimately irreconcilable. Nevertheless, there was no fundamental conflict about the end to be achieved. Desegregation as a goal had been accepted, if not overwhelmingly and enthusiastically embraced. The community's view of the reform is reflected in comments such as these in the local newspaper. As one parent said:

I might question it, but it is the law. I don't see how you're going to get away from that.¹¹⁰

Another parent had this to say:

There's always fear of the unknown. And I fear the unknown as most parents do. But I feel it's a small sacrifice if minority children do have equal education.¹¹¹

And a kind of quiet resignation permeates these comments:

We would obviously have preferred to stay at the Peabody, but we're not going to jump up and down and yell and scream. We'll go down to the Tobin and hope the kids will like it as well as the Peabody.¹¹²

Unlike many cities, which have erupted in angry protest, the issue of desegregation had not polarized the Cambridge community. On the contrary, if there is any one theme which characterized the five months of planning it is the theme of collective engagement. In the hundreds of hours spent in these meetings, people from across the city had come together to seek a solution, and in the struggle to formulate policy they had come to understand the essentially problematic nature of social reform. The planning phase was nearing its end. The alternatives had been exhaustively reviewed. The committees had submitted their reactions and suggested revisions.¹¹³ Now, they awaited the superintendent's final recommendations.

INSTITUTIONALIZING REFORM

The broad principle of school desegregation had been widely accepted, but the selection and adoption of concrete measures which would turn this broad principle into operational reality would prove to be a process of enormous complexity. As the planning period moved into the decisionmaking

phase, the differing perspectives of administrators and elected officials would profoundly affect the ways in which policy questions were considered and policy choices made. The superintendent, as the administrative head of the educational bureaucracy would analyze the merits of these proposals in ways which were consistent with his organizational concerns. The members of the school committee, as locally elected officials, would bring a complex array of political considerations to the decisionmaking process. In the end, each set of actors with their varying perspectives and differing concerns would contribute something to shaping the final outcome of school desegregation reform in Cambridge.

The Superintendent's Decision

The first task confronting the superintendent was the selection of one plan to present to the members of the school committee. Faced with a difficult decision, the superintendent had to choose among differing approaches and commit the school system to one course of action. Initially, he had favored the pairing approach seeing in this proposal a real possibility for producing significant educational change. However, as he reviewed the community's comments and met with principals and teachers, he began to rethink his position. The reassignment of staff, as well as students, would mean a total reorganization of the elementary schools, and he was not sure the system would be able to absorb this massive change. He also had doubts about the middle school concept and was not convinced that the skill, commitment and creativity to carry off such an innovation were present. Finally, the unsettled issue of school closings, the increasingly difficult economic situation and the changing demographic patterns of the city all

posed elements of uncertainty, and the superintendent worried that the plan would not be flexible enough to adapt to unforeseen and changing circumstances. 114

Ultimately, he based his decision on his perception of the school system's interests, constraints, and demands. His reluctance to formulate policy on estimates of an uncertain future combined with his view that the organization itself lacked the capacity to adapt to novel, complex, and uncertain arrangements led him to select the redistricting and educational zones plan. In his message to the community and the school committee, he presented his rationale for this decision:

The development of a desegregation plan for this school system has been a complex process which has tried to accommodate both the concerns of the community and the mandates embodied in federal and state law. I am submitting a modified version of Plan C to the Cambridge School Committee for their consideration. Within the guidelines of racial balance, the plan has been changed to reflect many of the suggestions which the community has made during the planning phase. The basic concepts remain the same. The plan is designed to eliminate racial imbalance and to provide a framework within which this school system may design and develop educational programs and options which enhance the quality of education for all children.

It is my hope that schools within educational zones will work cooperatively to plan and develop a rich and diverse set of educational offerings. Over time, the development of these programs could achieve school integration through parent choice. This plan allows the school system to move in that direction.

In addition, the flexibility of the educational zones structure allows the school system to respond to those broad social issues which affect the schools. The present uncertainty of the economic picture, the reality of declining enrollments, and the changing demographic patterns of the city may all pose future problems for the school system. This type of plan, I believe, is able to address these uncertainties with minimal

disruption to students once the plan is in place. 115

The plan was placed on the school committee calendar and public hearings were scheduled for the end of the month. Anticipating a unanimous vote on the recommendations, the superintendent and the desegregation staff began to prepare for the implementation effort.

An Unexpected Challenge

The smooth passage of the desegregation plan was not, however, to materialize. Instead, on the evening of the first public hearing on the proposed plan, a Cambridge parent challenged the legitimacy of the school department's two-year planning effort charging that the superintendent and the desegregation staff had overstated the city's legal obligation to racially balance its elementary schools. In a thirty-one page document submitted to the school committee, the parent questioned the superintendent's reading of the legal requirements of the Racial Imbalance Act, suggested that the community had been misled by the superintendent and the desegregation staff and recommended that the school committee obtain legal counsel to advise them of the nature and extent of their legal obligation to desegregate. 116

This public challenge confronted the school department and the school committee with basic questions about the facts of the case and the propriety of local actions. Throughout this period, Cambridge officials had justified the reform undertaking as a necessary local response to the legal authority of the state. Now, the legitimacy of the entire effort had been called into question.

Badly shaken by this unexpected turn of events, the superintendent, at the

request of the school committee, engaged the services of an attorney. The mayor, acting in his capacity as chairman of the school committee, also wrote to the Massachusetts commissioner of education requesting him to provide:

...a reiteration of the Department's opinion with regard to the Committee's legal responsibilities in this matter. Specifically, a statement describing the breadth of the Committee's obligation for compliance with the State and Federal racial balance and equal educational opportunity laws would support the Committee's and community's efforts to reach a final plan that is legally and educationally sound.¹¹⁷

The school committee, in the meantime, indicated that it would postpone all action until they had received advice from their legal counsel and from the commissioner.

Law and Ambiguity

The mayor's request to the commissioner, while stated in simple enough terms, in fact pointed precisely to those fundamental questions which have bedeviled school desegregation reform since the issue moved north and west in the early 1970's. Throughout that decade, basic questions about the nature of the wrong and the requirements of the remedy had persisted, and the very variety of judicial decisions and interpretations only served to deepen the confusion over these issues.¹¹⁸ In a sense, an authoritative answer to these questions in the Cambridge case could only have come about through the determination of the judiciary. Yet ironically, it was precisely this situation that, through taking action, the locals had sought to avoid. In an inherently ambiguous situation, they had chosen to resolve a problem in the political and administrative arena. Now the wisdom of

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this action was being called into question. Faced with a crisis of potentially serious political proportions, the school committee was badly in need of some authoritative statement to resolve this public dispute.

The commentaries of the commissioner and the attorney were to serve this function. Both responses would cloak the school desegregation effort in the mantle of legal authority. The attorney's opinion, delivered publicly at a special session of the school committee early in June, was unequivocal. In his memorandum the counsel indicated that, based on his investigation of the facts of the case, the Cambridge school system was obliged

...under Massachusetts law to adopt and implement an effective school desegregation plan.¹¹⁹

Federal law was also at issue, and the attorney was explicit in his view of the system's vulnerability to a federal court challenge. In his opinion, the system was vulnerable to a claim that it had engaged in unconstitutionally segregative policies and practices, and he strongly urged the school committee to adopt the desegregation plan.¹²⁰

The commissioner's response to the mayor's request provided still further justification for the local undertaking. In his reply, he stated that:

There is ample legal justification for the Cambridge School Committee to take the initiative and file a comprehensive voluntary racial balance plan.

The choice of means (for example, redistricting) toward the objective (racial balance) has been entirely up to the local officials and has not been imposed by the State Board or any outside agency.

We believe the time and thought and the extensive community participation devoted to the planning

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We believe the time and thought and the extensive community participation devoted to the planning

process has resulted in a proposed plan that is educationally and legally sound. We trust that the School Committee will see this planning process to fruition.¹²¹

On the basis of these official interpretations, the school committee accepted its obligation to act. And with the legal question now at rest, the resolution of the desegregation issue was in the political arena. The superintendent had presented the committee with a long range comprehensive plan to assure racially desegregated elementary schools in Cambridge. Now, the viability of the political arena as a vehicle for securing racial justice would be tested.

Late in May, the school committee began its deliberations on the plan. From the outset of the planning process, almost a year and a half before, members of the committee had taken a low profile on the racial imbalance problem. As the formally designated policymaking body for the school system, they had the legal authority to formulate proposals, but they had made only minor efforts to involve themselves in the desegregation issue. Having surrendered the initiative, the school committee had left the field open to the superintendent and the desegregation staff for the coordination and design of policy. Now, the superintendent was asking the committee to place the seal of local authority on an issue that had divided the nation.

Political Considerations

If organizational concerns had influenced the superintendent's deliberations, a different view of the constraints on action would emerge in the school committee's response to the plan. As elected officials, school committee members were concerned with the political implications of school

desegregation and the political repercussions which could result from implementing these measures. In a situation involving large stakes, the political leadership was not about to rubber stamp the superintendent's recommendations without consideration of their consequences. As they reviewed the plan, school committee members would search out potentially dangerous issues, and in the weeks that followed, they would move to shape policy with a view to the political consequences of action.

Thus, while publicly avowing their commitment to desegregation, some members of the committee privately presented the superintendent with a catalogue of objections to the plan. As these discussions progressed, it became increasingly clear that the superintendent's plan would not survive the political process intact. Some liberal members were vocal in their opposition to certain elements of the plan and urged the superintendent to make major concessions to address their concerns.¹²² Much of their opposition centered on the proposed assignment policy for students entering the school system for the first time. This policy had been designed to maximize parent choice and maintain neighborhood cohesion while at the same time allowing flexibility to address the changing racial and ethnic composition of the school population and the declining school enrollment. However, few school committee members understood the technical complexities the policy was designed to take into account. From their perspective, the assignment issue was a political one, and several liberal members of the committee feared that this policy would alienate the white middle-class and drive them out of the public schools. Claiming that the assignment policy could be a disaster for the city and its future development, they urged the superintendent to eliminate or postpone its adoption

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until some future time.¹²³

Fear of white flight was also the issue in the proposed guidelines for admission to magnet programs. Under the superintendent's plan, admissions to these programs would be tightened up to maintain their desegregation objective. However, several members of the committee argued that limiting options for families who had the economic resources to make other arrangements for their children would ultimately result in a predominantly minority school system, thereby defeating the very purpose of the desegregation plan.

While the controversy around the assignment policy and admissions to magnet programs stemmed mainly from liberal fears of middle-class white flight, the other area of major disagreement centered on an issue of concern to some conservative members of the committee. In his original recommendations, the superintendent had proposed redistricting of the eastern end of the city to integrate two neighboring schools, one predominantly white and the other predominantly minority. The black community had opposed this move maintaining that the selection of public housing for redistricting and the large number of students to be reassigned were inequitable features of the plan. The white working-class community which would be affected had remained largely silent.

At a meeting with the black community, the superintendent had indicated that he would review the recommendation and, while in the process of reconsidering it, he received information from the Cambridge Housing Authority which took him and the desegregation staff completely by surprise. The Housing Authority had quietly submitted a proposal to the U. S. Office of Housing and Urban Development, requesting funds for a massive rehabilitation of the housing project.¹²⁴ The renovation proposal included a provision for

the relocation of 166 minority families.

In light of this unexpected announcement and the uncertainty surrounding the housing developments in this district, the superintendent decided to defer the reassignment of minority students until the effects of the Housing Authority's plans were known.¹²⁵ However, he retained the recommendation to redistrict students from the predominantly white school nearby. It was this action which disturbed some members of the school committee. Publicly, they indicated their objections were based on the fact that students would be transferred from a new school to an old and dilapidated one which they had every intention of renovating. There was no point, they argued, in reassigning students until the intended renovation was completed.¹²⁶ The neighborhood which had been targeted for redistricting was a tightly knit white working-class neighborhood which had been historically unreceptive to minorities. And it is possible that some school committee members feared this action would provoke resistance and even violence. They urged the superintendent to postpone any action affecting this section of the city.

These weeks of discussion between the administration and the school committee were marked by intense controversy and negotiation as school committee members pressed their different political claims, and the superintendent struggled to maintain his recommendations intact. When it became apparent that the superintendent intended to submit his plan as proposed, the vice-chairman of the school committee began to draft a set of amendments in preparation for the school committee's scheduled vote on the plan. While this period of negotiation had not resulted in any explicit refinement of the plan, it would, nevertheless, have a significant effect on the

formulation of policy. For the revised and altered plan which was shortly to be adopted would in fact reflect some form of mutual accommodation between an administration committed to comprehensive desegregation and an elected body responsive to the concerns of its constituencies.

The School Committee Adopts a Racial Balance Plan

On the evening of June 11, 1980 the school committee assembled for the session which was to determine the outcome of school desegregation reform in Cambridge. Throughout the year and a half of planning, state officials, the school administration and the community had been the major actors in the desegregation drama. The state had stimulated the local level to undertake action. The school administration had taken up the reform idea and mobilized a broad base of support to address it. Together the administration and the community had developed a complex design on which local policy could be based. But the actual translation of these proposals and plans into operational reality would ultimately depend on the actions of those locally elected officials with the formal authority to make policy. While the administration's proposals had shaped the broad outlines of policy, in this decisionmaking phase, the political preferences and concerns of elected officials would influence its particular design. These concerns would be reflected in the amendments, modifications, and alterations of the plan which the school committee would propose in the course of the evening's meeting.

The decisive moment had arrived. The meeting was gavelled to order by the mayor, the superintendent's plan was presented, and then the consideration of amendments began.

Concern over the possible political implications of the assignment policy for newly entering students generated the first and most sweeping amendment to the plan. "Implementation of a zone assignment policy will not take place in September, 1980"¹²⁷ proclaimed the amendment:

- a. Instead, alternative assignment procedures will be studied in the Fall, 1980. Voluntary and involuntary methods of assignment will be considered. Their effect on education, racial balance, and legal obligations will be assessed, and their impact on potential school closings and district lines will be considered. Technical assistance for data analysis and computer simulation will be sought by the School Department with desegregation funds so that the possible alternative plans can be determined and their ramifications assessed.
- b. A multi-racial citizen/School Department committee that will include a substantial, city-wide representation of pre-school parents, will study and recommend alternative assignment policies to the School Committee before January 1981. This committee will have access to the technical assistance and accurate data.
- c. The School Committee will make a decision on a student assignment policy by February 20, 1981. It will be implemented for newly entering students as soon as it is adopted. The student assignment policy adopted by the Committee will provide a permanent mechanism for racial balance.¹²⁸

Uncertainty about the reactions of the white working-class neighborhood whose children would be reassigned to the minority school in need of renovation motivated the next amendment. The school committee moved to delay action until the housing authority's plans had stabilized and the school renovation was finalized.¹²⁹ These major amendments were followed by a series of minor changes which liberalized the criteria for admission to magnet programs and out of district schools.¹³⁰ These changes were aimed primarily at maximizing the options of the white middle-class parents

who formed the major constituency of the school committee's liberal coalition. An additional amendment proposed by the minority member of the school committee was in direct response to the minority community's concern with issues of affirmative action. The amendment pledged the school department to move to achieve a work force whose composition would reflect the composition of the city as a whole.¹³¹ Finally, the superintendent was ordered to devise an appeals process whereby parents could contest the reassignment of their children on the grounds of special hardship.¹³² When all the amendments had been discussed and approved, the amended plan was placed on the floor and formally adopted by the Cambridge School Committee on a vote of 6-1.¹³³

Although the politics of decisionmaking had substantially altered the design of the original plan, the actual outcome was mixed. As a result of the redistricting, program placements and transfer policies, the elementary schools would become substantially more integrated.¹³⁴ While the resolution of two of the more difficult issues had been postponed, the school committee was nevertheless on record with a commitment to resolve the problems of racial imbalance and racial isolation at the two remaining schools exempted from the plan and to adopt a student assignment policy by February of the following year. As they stated firmly in the preface to their amendments,

The committee recognizes that the lack of a permanent assignment policy must be corrected with all due speed, and commits itself within this plan to adopt a permanent assignment mechanism that provides long-term racial balance by February 20, 1981.¹³⁵

Schools opened quietly and peacefully by the following September, and in its

October census of the elementary schools, the school department was able to report a significant increase in integrated schooling in the city. ¹³⁶

EPILOGUE

With the adoption of Phase III of the desegregation plan in March of 1981, the racial balance agenda was complete. ¹³⁷ The final plan addressed the two pieces of unfinished business which remained to be resolved and added one new element to the desegregation story. The plan provided for a student assignment policy which would assign incoming students to a school on the basis of space available, racial balance and parent choice. The second component called for the pairing of the two schools in the eastern section of the city which had been unaffected by action the previous June. The new feature was an affirmative action clause stating that qualified minority staff would not be laid off unless the staff of their school, department or program reflected the racial composition of the city as a whole. ¹³⁸ This provision is being contested by the Cambridge Teachers Association, and the outcome, at this time, is uncertain.

Desegregation of the city's schools has been accomplished. While the reform idea had been externally initiated, the solution which was eventually shaped reflected the local view of what was ideologically preferable, administratively and politically feasible, and legally required. The years of planning had ultimately produced a desegregation plan which was comprehensive, equitably applied, and peacefully implemented. In terms of eliminating physical segregation, the Cambridge story is a success. Whether this process will ultimately lead to improved educational opportunities

for the minority children of the city remains an unanswered question.

CONCLUSION

In 1978, the Cambridge school system was faced with the challenge of undertaking a controversial reform for which there was no demand at the local level. Two and a half years later, all but one of the elementary schools had been desegregated, the program had been implemented without community resistance, and a plan which would complete the unfinished racial balance agenda had been adopted. Measured in terms of the state's goals, the effort to implement school desegregation had been successful. Viewed from the local perspective, the program could also be termed a success. The school system had faced a difficult and often divisive issue and had managed to resolve it in a way which was both faithful to the reform idea and responsive to other values, priorities and concerns which the local community could legitimately assert.

In the end, the story of school desegregation in Cambridge was the product of a joint authorship. As co-equal creators of the narrative, the state and the local level brought diverse influences and resources to bear on the implementation effort. State policy and the actions of state officials precipitated the change, provided the framework within which the reform effort evolved, and served as an on-going stimulus for sustaining change. Without state influence, it is unlikely that the local government would have been inclined or able to take strong action on the issue of racial imbalance. In the absence of local demand, there was no motivation for initiating this reform. Yet if the state provided the impetus for

action, the attainment of these objectives was primarily dependent on features of the local system. It was local leadership which took up the reform idea, mobilized support to address the problem and devised a school desegregation plan which was comprehensive, equitable and peacefully implemented. The story of school desegregation evolved through this counterpoint, and it was the interplay of elements at both the state and local level that ultimately shaped the tale.

One element was the Massachusetts legislation itself. While most states have played only a minimal role in efforts to promote school desegregation, Massachusetts was the first state in the nation to pass legislation requiring the elimination of racial imbalance in the school districts of the commonwealth. Although the law was subsequently amended, its symbolic importance as a public expression of principle and its statutory authority, however diluted, provided the major impetus for reform. The legislation's objectives, set forth in specific measurable terms, provided a common framework within which the issue could be understood, discussed, and eventually resolved. While other cities' efforts to address the issue of school desegregation in the political arena have often broken down under the weight of competing community agendas and the absence of any single, widely accepted, superordinate objective, the Cambridge effort was aided by the explicitness of the legislation. Although many at the local level disagreed with the statistical conception of equal educational opportunity, the law's clear racial balance standard imposed from the outset an authoritative, if somewhat limited, definition of the ends to be achieved.

If state law provided the guidelines for the program, it was at the local level that the change effort took on its particular form and shape. The legislation had stated the ends to be achieved, but it left unanswered questions of major political importance. How were these ends to be accomplished? How should the burden of remedy be distributed? How would the conflict between the concern for community and the demand for equality be mediated? It was the locals who were left with making these critical value choices and with generating the political support to sustain them. And in the end, it was local logic as much as state actions which determined what the idea of school desegregation would mean in practice.

Another important element in the implementation of school desegregation was the presence of complementary organizational units at the state and local level. Through the combination of incentives and sanctions, officials of the BEEC sought to influence behaviour at the local level. The availability of state funding for school renovations provided one motivating force for administrators at the local level to initiate the reform, and the state's legal authority and the cost of non-compliance which it implied, served as another motivating force for the political leadership and the community to address the issue of racial imbalance. Not only did state actions create the initial impetus for change, but further state interventions at critical points in the process provided an ongoing stimulus for sustaining and enlarging the reform effort.

If the state had the authority and the incentives to stimulate new lines of policy, they were, however, too far removed from the local level to

steer or control its execution. Securing local agreement to undertake the reform was itself no guarantee that the change effort would be self executing. Local attention was not constant, but rather shifted in ways which were uncertain and unpredictable. Thus, the state was dependent on allies at the local level who would take up the task of organizing local attention and forging the necessary links in the process of change. It was the desegregation staff at the local level who played this critical role. They raised the issue in the local arena, took active steps to mobilize a broad base of support to address it, developed a set of operational objectives to guide the reform effort, and designed and coordinated the long planning process. Local administrators' active and on-going involvement in the day-to-day activities of implementation, their proximity to the local power structure, and their capacity to mobilize local attention and action provided the needed organizational support at the local level to manage and sustain the reform effort.

If the state effort to steer and direct the reform course was one theme of the change process, then the local attempt to design and devise a course was another. Local strategies for translating the reform idea into practice focussed as much on the process of change as on the product. Actual school desegregation measures were implemented only at the end of a long planning period during which the community came to understand the problem they were facing, developed a commitment to address it, and engaged in active efforts to formulate solutions. The choice of a planning process which involved hundreds of actors meeting regularly over a two year period, in effect, created a public arena in which the problem of racial imbalance

could be raised, understood, and eventually resolved. As the locals discussed the law, reviewed their system's history, and studied the data of the schools, local understanding of the problem gradually developed. As actors at the local level explored alternatives, revised goals and procedures, and adapted and altered recommendations in response to local needs and interests, they made the school desegregation issue their own. The change effort was above all an evolutionary one. Through a cumulative process of local learning, the community came to terms with the necessity for change, and through an ad-hoc trial and error search for solutions, they designed a policy which both they and the state could live with.

The final element in this counterpoint was the response of the local leadership to the state's intervention. The effectiveness of the state's attempt to alter conditions at the local level was ultimately dependent on a local leadership willing and able to utilize this intervention to achieve a political resolution. The state could raise the issue, but it was only the local level which could generate the necessary commitment and action to implement the reform idea. In practice, the commitment of the local leadership meant a willingness on the part of locally elected officials to support this goal both in word and in deed. In their official pronouncements, school committee members appeared united and unequivocal about their determination to uphold the law. This public posture conferred authority and legitimacy on the undertaking and played an important part in promoting community acceptance of desegregation. Nor was this political support merely symbolic. Faced with a series of recommendations which would turn the idea of school desegregation into practice at the local level, the political leadership did not vacillate. Although they altered and amended the plan in light of their particular concerns, they accepted its basic premises. And they acted.

It was the ability of the local leadership to amass the political will to achieve this change which made a resolution of this issue within the political arena possible.

Of the many changes which occurred in the process of undertaking this reform, one result may well be of enduring significance. The emergence of the school desegregation issue has profoundly altered the basic orientation of the local level. The racial balance implementation process itself created an opportunity and a stimulus for raising and addressing other issues of racial justice. The mobilization of minority teachers to protect and expand their position within the educational system is one manifestation of this change in local orientation, and the increased political activism of the black community in the realm of electoral politics is another. The concrete results of this new stage in the ongoing struggle to achieve equality remain to be seen.

What are the lessons to be learned from this city's experience with school desegregation? One simple lesson concerns the need to understand the complexity of the change process under even the most promising circumstances. The Cambridge school system was small, the geography and demography of the city made a variety of solutions feasible, there was sufficient administrative commitment and capacity to manage the reform effort, and the political climate was propitious for change. Yet, despite all of this, the process of translating the reform idea into practice was staggeringly complex. Moving ideas into the public arena, marshalling support, devising solutions are processes which sound appealingly simple in the abstract. But in practice, they require numerous transactions, multiple decision points, endless negotiations, time and patience. Nor are these processes linear.

For as the change process evolved and the reform idea became increasingly concrete, initial ideas were reformulated, agreements renegotiated, and solutions reshaped and refashioned over time. BEEO officials, familiar with the historic battle for reform which had been fought out at the state level, were impatient to see the fruits of their labors. But at the local level the seed had first to be planted and nurtured, before it could blossom. While the scope and pace of change may well have been frustrating to state reformers, the change process at the local level proceeded through a logic of its own. The successful outcome suggests that the demands and expectations of state (and federal) reformers ought perhaps to be tempered by a more realistic appreciation of the complexities of the change process at the local level.

This points to a second lesson of the story. The prospects for successful implementation of school desegregation were enhanced by the flexibility at the local level in designing measures tailored to suit local needs and circumstances. The legislation fixed a minimum standard, but the plan itself was the product of a local design. As such it reflected both the limitations and the potential of policymaking at the local level. The political necessity of taking into account a variety of conflicting needs and interests resulted in a plan which accomplished neither maximum integration nor a significant alteration in the socio-economic mix of the student population. But it did produce elementary schools which were significantly more integrated. And the plan was workable. One of the realities of school desegregation reform is that it is unlikely to succeed unless the populations which are affected will support it. The plan was able to generate that support because the policy designed by the locals reflected a realistic accommodation

between national goals and aspirations and local needs and political realities.

The emphasis on local problem solving, however, need not be equated with government abdication of the pursuit of equal educational opportunity. While the actual design of school desegregation policy would seem best left in the hands of the locals, there is nevertheless, a crucial role for both the state and federal government. A third lesson of the Cambridge tale is that the problems of racial justice simply cannot or will not be resolved in the local arena without the active involvement and attention of other units of government. The central task of the federal and state government thus becomes one of preserving the authenticity of the struggle while simultaneously addressing the individual realities of the vastly different cities and towns in the nation. Where traditional racial balance remedies are feasible, states and the federal government should continue to use their considerable authority to stimulate local efforts to alter the status quo. The application of a minimum state standard to guide the reform effort made sense in Cambridge where geography and demography made a racial balance objective feasible while still maintaining a measure of neighborhood cohesion. But the application of this same uniform standard in another city might produce a very different result. Where changing demographic patterns render more conventional remedial standards unattainable, the states and the federal government must go beyond simple reductionist conceptions of reform and encourage local officials to conceive and develop alternative strategies to foster and sustain integration.

The wide variety of court ordered school desegregation remedies demonstrates that there is no one best solution for school desegregation.

But the complexity and difficulty of achieving this goal should not lead us to abandon our national commitment to equal educational opportunity. In this regard, the story of school desegregation in Cambridge is an optimistic one. For with all its shortcomings, it shows that we still have the will, the wit, and the imagination to pursue this dream.

FOOTNOTES

¹347 U.S. 483 (1954).

²413 U.S. 189 (1973).

³See, for example, David L. Kirp, "Race, Politics, and the Courts: School Desegregation in San Francisco," Harvard Educational Review, 46: 572-611, November, 1976; Lillian B. Rubin, Busing and Backlash, (Berkeley, Calif: U. of Calif. Press, 1972); Charles V. Willie and Susan L. Greenblatt, Community Politics and Educational Change (New York: Longman, Inc., 1981).

⁴Racial Imbalance Act 1965, Mass. Gen. Laws, Ch. 71 Sec. 37C and 37D and Ch. 15 Sec. 1I-1K (1965).

⁵For a discussion of the role of state government in school desegregation, see Frederick S. Edelstein, "Federal and State Roles in School Desegregation," Education and Urban Society, 9 (1977), pp. 303-326.

⁶The United States Commission on Civil Rights has published a number of studies of school systems which have voluntarily desegregated. In the majority of these cases, desegregation has been accomplished principally by either closing predominantly minority schools or by transferring minority students on a voluntary basis to predominantly white schools. See, for example, U.S.C.C.R., School Desegregation in Providence, Rhode Island (Washington, D.C.: October, 1977); U.S.C.C.R., School Desegregation in Santa Barbara California (Washington, D.C.: July 1977); U.S.C.C.R., School Desegregation in Portland, Oregon (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 1977); U.S.C.C.R., School Desegregation in Racine, Wisconsin (Washington, D.C.: June, 1977).

⁷See, for example, Martha Derthick, New Towns in Town: Why a Federal Program Failed (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1972); Jerome T. Murphy, "The Education Bureaucracies Implement Novel Policy: The Politics of Title I of ESEA," in Alan P. Sindler, ed., Policy and Politics in America: Six Case Studies (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1973); Jeffrey Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky, Implementation (Berkeley: U. of Calif. Press, 1973).

⁸Milbrey Wallin McLaughlin, "Implementation of ESEA Title I: A Problem of Compliance," in Making Change Happen, Dale Mann, ed. (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1978). p.179.

⁹See, for examples, Eleanor Farrar, John E. DeSanctis, David K. Cohen, "Views from Below: Implementation Research in Education," (Cambridge, Mass.: The Huron Institute, 1979); Giadomenico Majone and Aaron Wildavsky, "Implementation as Evolution," Policy Studies Review Annual, Vol. 2, 1978.

¹⁰Farrar, et al., op.cit. p.56.

¹¹Karl Mannheim, Essays on The Sociology of Knowledge, Paul Kecskemeti, ed. (New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952), p. 1.

¹²For an elaboration on procedures in qualitative analysis, see Robert Bogdan and Steven J. Taylor, Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods (New York: Wiley, 1975); John Lofland, Analyzing Social Settings (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1971); Leonard Schatzman and Anselm L. Strauss, Field Research (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974).

¹³For a discussion on intensive interviewing, see Jerome T. Murphy, Getting the Facts (Santa Monica, Calif.: Goodyear, 1980), pp. 75-107.

¹⁴S.B. Sutton, Cambridge Reconsidered (Cambridge, Ma.: M.I.T.Press, 1976), p.1.

¹⁵1975 Mid-Decade Census Survey, "Population Summary," Cambridge Community Development Department, 1976.

¹⁶Elementary and Secondary Student Enrollment Statistics, Cambridge School Department, October 1, 1978.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Edelstein, "Federal and State Roles," op. cit., pp. 303-326.

²⁰Mass. Gen. Laws, Ch. 71 Sec. 37D and 37E and Ch. 15 Sec. 1I, 1J and 1K, (1965).

²¹"Anti-Bias Act First in U.S.," The Boston Globe, August 19, 1965, p.1.

²²Mass. Gen. Laws, Ch. 15, Sec. 37C (1965).

²³Mass. Gen. Laws, Ch. 15, Sec. 37D (1965).

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ For a discussion of the early history of state efforts to enforce the Racial Imbalance Act see, J. Harold Flannery, A Study of the Massachusetts Racial Imbalance Act (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for Law and Education, 1972); Frank Levy, Northern Schools and Civil Rights (Chicago: Markham, 1971), pp. 132-152.

²⁶ The Boston Globe, July 17, 1974, p. 1 and p.17.

²⁷ Mass. General Laws, Ch. 636 (1974).

²⁸ This early history is described in Flannery, A Study of the Massachusetts Racial Imbalance Act, op.cit., pp. 517-530.

²⁹ Ibid., p.518.

³⁰ Frank J. Frisoli to Rae Cecilia Kipp, Chairman Massachusetts Board of Education, Dec. 6, 1971.

³¹ Flannery, op. cit., pp. 517-530.

³² Charles L. Glenn, Jr. to William C. Lannon, March 9, 1986.

³³ Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Education, Individual School Reports, "Table 3. Enrollment by Race," Oct. 1, 1978.

³⁴ The school desegregation issue in Boston was ultimately settled by a federal court order, Morgan v. Hennigan, 379 F SUPP. 410 (D. Mass. 1974). Desegregation in Springfield was implemented following a state court order, School Committee of Springfield v. Board of Education II, Mass. Sh (1973) 657.

³⁵ Charles L. Glenn, Jr. to William C. Lannon, July 5, 1978.

³⁶ Field Note, July 20, 1978.

³⁷ Morgan v. Hennigan, 379 F. Supp. 410(D. Mass. 1974); School Committee of Springfield v. Board of Education II, Mass. Sh (1973) 657.

³⁸ Interview, William C. Lannon, July 20, 1978.

³⁹Paul Berman and Milbrey Wallin McLaughlin, Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change, Vol. VII, "Factors Affecting Implementation and Continuation," (Santa Montica, Calif: Rand Corp., 1978), p. 19.

⁴⁰For an account of the ways in which policy shapes implementation see Majone and Wildavsky; op. cit., p. 111-113.

⁴¹Charles Glenn to William C. Lannon, August 4, 1978.

⁴²William C. Lannon to Charles L. Glenn, Aug. 1, 1978; William C. Lannon to Charles L. Glenn, Sept. 14, 1978.

⁴³William C. Lannon to Charles L. Glenn, Sept. 14, 1978.

⁴⁴William C. Lannon to Charles L. Glenn, August 1, 1978.

⁴⁵The planning unit attached to the office of the superintendent continued to be called Project SPAN, the name given the project which had assisted for planning the new high school in the previous year.

⁴⁶For an illustration of this implementation problem see Pressman and Wildavsky's study of the E.D.A. program in Oakland, California, Implementation, op. cit.

⁴⁷Cambridge Chronicle, October 12, 1978, p. 7.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Cambridge Chronicle, Nov. 2, 1978; Cambridge Chronicle, Nov. 30, 1978.

⁵⁰Field notes, Cambridge School Committee, Hearings of Subcommittee on Long Range Planning, Nov. 14, 1978 and Nov. 21, 1978.

⁵¹Interview, Oct. 6, 1981.

⁵²Peter Marris and Martin Rein, Dilemmas of Social Reform: Poverty and Community Action in the United States (New York: Atherton Press, 1967).

⁵³Field Note, Nov. 7, 1978.

⁵⁴Cambridge School Department, Statement Regarding the Need for a Comprehensive Plan for the Elementary Schools, Nov. 20, 1978.

⁵⁵Field Note, Dec. 13, 1978.

⁵⁶See Willie and Greenblatt, op. cit. on the importance of local leadership in promoting peaceful desegregation.

⁵⁷SPAN Presentation to the Cambridge School Committee; Resource Document A, "Amended Massachusetts Racial Imbalance Act, 1974," Resource Document B, "State Dept. of Education Regulations"; Resource Document D, "Cambridge School Department Correspondence with the Massachusetts Department of Education re: Racial Balance 1968-1979."

⁵⁸Interviews with School Committee Members, Dec. 12, 1978, Dec. 14, 1978, Dec. 15, 1978, Dec. 19, 1978.

⁵⁹For an interesting analysis of the decisionmaking of school boards, see Paul E. Peterson, School Politics, Chicago Style (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Cambridge municipal elections are non-partisan. However, the Cambridge Civic Association (an off-spring of the citizens' coalition which sought to reform local government in the 1940's) does endorse candidates for local office. The candidates who received these endorsements are those whom I have characterized as reform candidates.

⁶²Interview, Dec. 19, 1978.

⁶³Interviews with Masters, Jan. 24, 1979, Jan. 26, 1979, Jan. 29, 1979.

⁶⁴William C. Lannon to Cambridge School Committee, Recommendation 79-032, March 7, 1979.

⁶⁵Cambridge School Committee, order 79-032; March 7, 1979.

⁶⁶Rubin, op. cit.

⁶⁷Parent Support and Action Center to Cambridge School Committee, March 15, 1979.

⁶⁸Field Note, March 28, 1979.

⁶⁹ Cambridge School Department, Draft Proposal for School Group Activities, March 7, 1979; Cambridge School Department, Some Issues to be Addressed by Racial Balance Advisory Committees, April 2, 1979.

⁷⁰ William C. Lannon to Cambridge elementary school parents, March 3, 1979.

⁷¹ Cambridge School Department, Agendas and Minutes of the Racial Balance Advisory Committees, Weeks of April 2-5, April 23-April 25.

⁷² This account draws on the minutes of both local school and city-wide racial balance advisory committee meetings. Cambridge School Department, Minutes of Racial Balance Advisory Committees, Week of April 9-12; Week of April 23-26; Week of April 30-May 3; Week of May 8-10.

⁷³ William C. Lannon to Cambridge School Committee, Racial Balance Advisory Committees' Recommendations on Short and Long Range Issues, June 3, 1979.

⁷⁴ Cambridge School Department, Cambridge Racial Balance Plan, June 7, 1979.

⁷⁵ Cambridge School Committee, Order 79-070, Racial Balance Plan, June 20, 1979.

⁷⁶ The Boston Globe, August 29, 1979, p. 21.

⁷⁷ Cambridge Chronicle, August 3, 1979, p. 4.

⁷⁸ Charles L. Glenn, Jr., to William C. Lannon, June 8, 1979.

⁷⁹ Cambridge School Department, Project SPAN Proposal to State Department of Education, July 15, 1979, p. 1.

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 2-3.

⁸¹ Ibid., p.5.

⁸² Ibid., p.4.

⁸³ Charles L. Glenn, Jr., to William C. Lannon, Sept. 5, 1979.

⁶⁹ Cambridge School Department, Draft Proposal for School Group Activities, March 7, 1979; Cambridge School Department, Some Issues to be Addressed by Racial Balance Advisory Committees, April 2, 1979.

⁷⁰ William C. Lannon to Cambridge elementary school parents, March 23, 1979.

⁷¹ Cambridge School Department, Agendas and Minutes of the Racial Balance Advisory Committees, Weeks of April 2-5, April 23-April 25.

⁷² This account draws on the minutes of both local school and city-wide racial balance advisory committee meetings. Cambridge School Department, Minutes of Racial Balance Advisory Committees, Week of April 9-12; Week of April 23-26; Week of April 30-May 3; Week of May 8-10.

⁷³ William C. Lannon to Cambridge School Committee, Racial Balance Advisory Committees' Recommendations on Short and Long Range Issues, June 3, 1979.

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⁷⁶ The Boston Globe, August 29, 1979, p. 21.

⁷⁷ Cambridge Chronicle, August 3, 1979, p. 4.

⁷⁸ Charles L. Glenn, Jr., to William C. Lannon, June 8, 1979.

⁷⁹ Cambridge School Department, Project SPAN Proposal to State Department of Education, July 15, 1979, p. 1.

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 2-3.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 5.

⁸² Ibid., p. 4.

⁸³ Charles L. Glenn, Jr., to William C. Lannon, Sept. 5, 1979.

⁸⁴ Cambridge School Department, Voluntary Control Transfers that Positively Affect Racial Balance, Oct. 15, 1979; Cambridge School Department, Racial Census of the Cambridge Elementary Schools as of October 1, 1979, October 19, 1979.

⁸⁵ Boston Herald American, Sept. 21, 1979; Boston Herald American, Oct. 13, 1979.

⁸⁶ Cambridge School Department, Criteria for the Development of a Racial Balance Plan, Oct. 16, 1979.

⁸⁷ Cambridge School Department Memorandum to Racial Balance and Educational Planning Advisory Committees, Description of Measures Which Have Been Used by School Systems to Achieve Stable and Long Range Racial Balance, Oct. 17, 1979.

⁸⁸ Cambridge School Department, Reports from Individual Racial Balance and Educational Planning Advisory Committees, Nov. 13, 1979, p. 5.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 12.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p.3.

⁹¹ Agassiz School, Newsletter to Parents and Staff, Jan. 4, 1980.

⁹² Cambridge School Department, Citywide Advisory Committee Task Force on Racial Balance and Educational Planning Recommendations, Dec. 6, 1979.

⁹³ Ibid., pp. 1 and 2.

⁹⁴ Cambridge Chronicle, December 20, 1979., p.9.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Field Note, January 9, 1980.

⁹⁷ Interview, Jan. 10, 1980.

⁹⁸ Cambridge School Department, Analysis of Racial Balance Recommendations, Jan., 1980.

⁹⁹ Fletcher School Racial Balance Advisory Committee to Project SPAN, Feb. 14, 1980.

⁸⁴ Cambridge School Department, Voluntary Control Transfers that Positively Affect Racial Balance, Oct. 15, 1979; Cambridge School Department, Racial Census of the Cambridge Elementary Schools as of October 1, 1979, October 19, 1979.

⁸⁵ Boston Herald American, Sept. 21, 1979; Boston Herald American, Oct. 13, 1979.

⁸⁶ Cambridge School Department, Criteria for the Development of a Racial Balance Plan, Oct. 16, 1979.

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⁸⁸ Cambridge School Department, Reports from Individual Racial Balance and Educational Planning Advisory Committees, Nov. 13, 1979, p. 5.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 12.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p.3.

⁹¹ Agassiz School, Newsletter to Parents and Staff, Jan. 4, 1980.

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⁹³ Ibid., pp. 1 and 2.

⁹⁴ Cambridge Chronicle, December 20, 1979., p. 9.

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⁹⁶ Field Note, January 9, 1980.

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⁹⁹ Fletcher School Racial Balance Advisory Committee to Project SPAN, Feb. 14, 1980.

¹⁰⁰ Cambridge School Department, Recommendations of Racial Balance and Educational Planning Advisory Committees, Feb. 27, 1980.

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¹⁰⁵ Cambridge School Department, Reports, op. cit.

¹⁰⁶ Cambridge School Department, Reports, op.cit., p.7.

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¹⁰⁸ Cambridge Chronicle, April 10, 1980, p.6.

¹⁰⁹ Plan D: Parent Choice, Draft 2, p.2.

¹¹⁰ Cambridge Chronicle, March 27, 1980, p.4.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

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¹¹³ Cambridge School Department, Minutes of Racial Balance and Educational Planning Advisory Committees: April 1, 1980; April 6, 1980; April 17, 1980; April 30, 1980; May 3, 1980; May 12, 1980.

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- 134 Massachusetts Department of Education, Individual School Reports, Oct. 1, 1980.
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