



6-1959

The Relationship of Behavioral Patterns of Selected Superintendents to the Process of Public School Desegregation

Harry Smith Blanton
University of Tennessee - Knoxville

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Harry Smith Blanton entitled "The Relationship of Behavioral Patterns of Selected Superintendents to the Process of Public School Desegregation." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, with a major in Educational Administration.

, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

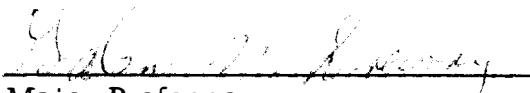
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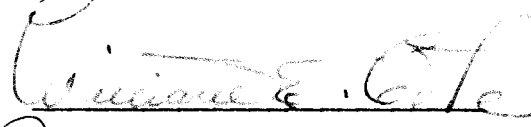

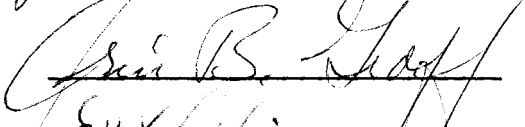
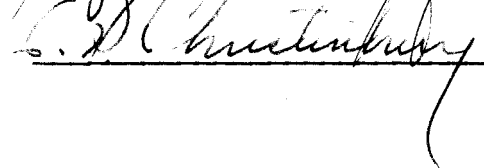
May 28, 1959

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Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:


Dean of the Graduate School

THE RELATIONSHIP OF BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS OF
SELECTED SUPERINTENDENTS TO THE PROCESS
OF PUBLIC SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

A THESIS

Submitted to
The Graduate Council
of
The University of Tennessee
in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Education

by

Harry Smith Blanton

June 1959

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the Supreme Court decision of May 1954 declaring racially segregated schools unconstitutional, many local districts and state systems, formerly segregated, have become racially desegregated. Many of these school systems accomplished this program of desegregation with apparent ease, while other systems experienced some difficulties. Could the behavioral patterns of school superintendents involved in desegregation influence the outcome of this process? It was such a question as the above that created the interest in this study.

The results of the contributions of the superintendents in this study measure to some degree the successes and failures of desegregation in public schools and enable school superintendents attempting to make the transition to determine the direction they would take in similar situations.

Many aspects of desegregation have been studied and reported. However, the writer believes that there is much to be learned from those persons who have had experience in the transition to racially integrated school systems. Their policies, trials

and errors, and patterns of behavior perhaps mean more in reality than many opinions. Because of this belief, this study was felt to be of great importance as an insight into the experiences of others and as an aid to those attempting to undertake the much discussed integration issue.

The actions taken by school superintendents in desegregating public schools were due in part to beliefs and attitudes held by these persons. These beliefs and attitudes formulated patterns of behavior that guided the superintendents in decision-making.

This study is an attempt to show the relationship of the behavioral patterns exhibited by selected school superintendents to the total outcome of desegregating public schools in the selected communities. (With its limitations, (it may bring into focus some similarities and common principles that can be applied by others facing the transition from racially segregated schools. The writer has stated the facts as found in hopes they will throw some light on desegregating public schools elsewhere.

Need for Study

There was a felt need for a study of desegregation that would give a descriptive analysis of actions taken by superintendents

during desegregation of the public schools. The superintendent of schools is the official educational leader of the community, and major policy changes for improving school programs are generally recommended to the board of education by him.

It was felt that a study of superintendents' behavioral patterns during desegregation would enable superintendents who in the future may face the issue to study the recommendations, policies, and plans of superintendents who had completed the transition as an aid to formulating plans for desegregation. The procedures used by superintendents in solving the problem could be used as guidelines by superintendents facing the problem in the future.

The Problem

The problem in this study was to attempt to determine the results or effects on desegregation of varying behavioral patterns of school superintendents which developed when selected school systems attempted to bring about racially integrated school systems.

An important factor to be considered was the actions of various groups within the community and the effects these actions had on the shaping of the behavioral patterns of the superintendents. It was also necessary to look at various other issues which led up

to and followed the desegregation issue in order to get a complete report of the behavioral patterns of the superintendents.

Sub-Problems

The sub-problems in this study were the following:

1. To list and describe the forces that shaped the behavioral patterns of superintendents.
2. To relate the impact of forces to actions taken by the superintendents during desegregation.
3. To determine the kinds of effects varying behavioral patterns had on the desegregation process.

Assumptions

1. The superintendent is the educational leader of the school system.
2. Leadership actions of superintendents can be related to outcomes of problem solving.

Definition of Terms

To explain the terms as they were used in this study, the

following definitions were included:

Segregation will refer to the separation in the public schools of children who are considered to be whites from those who are considered to be Negroes.

Public school desegregation will refer to the transition period from public school segregation to racially integrated schools.

Behavioral patterns will refer to actions which seem to be similar in nature that emerged from all actions taken by the superintendents in this study.

Integration will refer to the participation of Negroes and whites in the same activities with a maximum of cooperation. Integration includes bi-racial extra-curricular and school-related activities as well as classroom activities.

Limitations

This study was limited to ten public school superintendents in systems where racially integrated schools existed in the State of Kentucky.

No individual or system studies was to be identified by name.

All superintendents in this study were recommended by the

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Kentucky State Department of Education. The reasons for this limitation were:

1. Approval for conducting the study had to be granted by the State Department of Education.
2. Without support from the State Department of Education it was felt superintendents would not be as willing to cooperate.
3. The State Department wanted to insure desegregated school systems against disturbances that might tend to disrupt desegregated school programs.

Only information concerning the behavioral patterns of superintendents was applicable to this study.

Related Studies

Many avenues of bi-racial education have been studied; and there is felt to be a need for further study, for apparently no one study can be comprehensive or penetrating enough to supply the answers to the many problems incurred by all concerned in desegregating public schools. There is a wide variety in the methods and procedures which each has used to keep the happenings accurate and factual. All of these studies have been attempts at describing the actual experiences of many communities and aimed at unfolding

helpful suggestions and conclusions from those who have desegregated, partially or completely.

It is found that the related studies referred to in this study dealt with several states; therefore the amount of community coverage differs.

Ashmore studied bi-racial education in the United States and compiled an objective appraisal of the bi-racial aspects of the American educational system.¹ The communities studied in his book were in all states of transition; some were successful at temporarily forestalling integration, some were partially integrated, and others were withholding positive action while awaiting court decisions on pending cases concerning integration.² The importance of the reaction of the community to integration is stressed throughout Ashmore's study.

A factual account of the status of white and Negro schools in the South was made by a group of Southern educators.³ The authors

¹Harry S. Ashmore, The Negro and the Schools (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1954), pp. 3-12.

²ibid., pp. 95-102

³Truman M. Pierce et al., White and Negro Schools in the South (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955).

gave an analysis of bi-racial education in the South. The psychological, sociological, and philosophical foundations of the South, particularly as they bear on segregation, were discussed in detail.

This study gives a statistical account of conditions school officials must consider in making policy changes. A historical background of bi-racial education in the South is treated with the progress that has been accelerated in the past few years.

The authors predicted that present trends of educational improvement in the Southern region will continue and problems will be solved by use of the method of intelligence. They felt further that the substantial body of responsible leadership will courageously and conscientiously seek a resolution of issues according to what is in the best interests of all. A prediction on desegregation was that the many substantial variations in local communities throughout the region will be taken into proper account in resolving the segregation issue.

In their attempt to define and evaluate the school issues, the authors pointed with consistency to the American value system and its conflict with segregated schools.

Schools in Transition is a series of case studies of communities that have made the transition from bi-racial public schools to

integrated systems.⁴

The text of the book deals with important aspects of community and school cooperation. Detailed descriptions outline procedures used by the various communities during the transition period. There is no attempt made to emphasize any set pattern for success in desegregating schools; rather, it is emphasized that each community has its own special blend of factors that are at work to produce integration or resistance to it.⁵

Among the significant factors to consider in making an initial diagnosis of a particular community are the following:⁶

1. Number and proportion of Negroes .
2. Presence of other "minority" racial or cultural groups .
3. Extent and nature of segregation and discrimination in public facilities and activities other than the schools .
4. Activity of organizations dealing with intergroup relations , local and non-local .

⁴Robin M. Williams, Jr., and Margaret W. Ryan, Schools in Transition (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1954).

⁵Ibid., p. 235 .

⁶Ibid., pp. 239-240 .

5. Organization and financing of the school system.
6. Amount and kind of communication between school board and administration and other citizens and between Negroes and whites.
7. Employment status, tenure, and qualifications of white and Negro teachers.
8. Local attitudes toward the schools and their leadership.
9. Policies and practices of state agencies concerned with public education.
10. Role of local groups such as churches, service clubs, and civic organizations.

A guidebook, Action Patterns in School Desegregation, was written to enable school teachers, administrators, and school board members to undertake a program of desegregation with the least possible grief, error, and social disruption.⁷ This study dealt with the readiness of the school and the community for desegregation, policy-making and developing plans for desegregation, detailing responsibilities, and adopting the educational program to meet the

⁷Herbert Wey and John Corey, Action Patterns in School Desegregation (Bloomington, Indiana: A Phi Delta Kappa Commission Project, 1959), p. 7.

needs of all children.

This study is related to the writer's study in that community preparation and development of workable plans were discussed; a positive type of leadership and the use of advisory committees aided in achieving successful desegregation.

Some pertinent findings were the following:

1. Superintendents participating in the study felt they had a definite responsibility for determining and creating readiness on the part of the board of education and the community.

2. In communities where public places had been desegregated before schools began their preparation, the transition resulted with less disruption of schools.

3. Sports were named as excellent starters for bringing the two races together.

4. School officials listed numerous arguments which aided in convincing the public of the soundness of desegregation. Besides the legal aspect, economy of desegregation as compared to segregation was an important persuader. Other arguments included the fact that segregation hinders our international diplomacy and is not in harmony with Christian ethics.

5. Special attention should be given to preparing citizens of

low-income and farm groups .

6. In analyzing different plans , it becomes apparent that there is no one answer. Each community must develop its plan in the light of community conditions and objectives to be accomplished.

7. White teachers and administrators should arm themselves with factual information about Negro students and the Negro race in general. This information can be used in helping parents and white students overcome fears which often have no real basis .

Procedures

This is one of two companion studies done at the University of Tennessee in an attempt to show some relationship between the behavior of superintendents of public school systems and the de-segregation of these school systems. The companion study conducted by Sam H. Ingram was an effort to identify and describe the behavioral patterns of selected public school superintendents.⁸

⁸Sam H. Ingram, "Behavioral Patterns of Selected Kentucky Superintendents During the Process of Public School Desegregation" (Unpublished Ed.D. thesis, College of Education, The University of Tennessee, June 1959).

One of the early problems in this study was obtaining the cooperation of a state in which desegregation had made enough progress to afford a range of choices in selecting superintendents.

Contacts were made with representatives of the West Virginia State Department of Education. Although the State Department saw merit in conducting a study of desegregation in West Virginia, they did not feel that community conditions at the time were favorable to conduct such a study.

The Kentucky State Department of Education was then asked for permission to do the study in that State. They were willing to cooperate and to assist in selecting the systems for this study.

The first visit to the State was for the purpose of meeting with a representative of the State Department of Education. A visit was made to the systems that replied to the State Department's request. This visit was an introductory visit to the superintendents in the systems. The State Department representative accompanied the writer on this visit. The superintendents were given an explanation of the type of study to be conducted and what information they would be expected to furnish. Possible dates for interviews with the superintendent and other persons involved in planning for desegregation were tentatively scheduled. These

dates were later confirmed by an exchange of correspondence .

At least five persons were interviewed in each system. These included the superintendent, a board of education member, a Negro citizen or school principal, the principal of the desegregated school, and a white citizen. All persons interviewed were guaranteed anonymity .

The interviews were designed to obtain information as to what happened preceding and during the process of desegregation. An interview guide (~~see Appendix A~~) was developed as an aid for obtaining the information and was designed to reveal specific actions of the superintendent during desegregation .

The first section of the interview guide consisted of questions concerning preliminary actions taken by the superintendent in initial preparation for desegregation. The following questions were asked:

1. Who made the initial preparations for desegregation ?
2. Why was this action taken ?
3. What was the nature of this initial action ?
4. When was this action taken ?

These questions were asked to establish who made the initial approach to desegregation. If the superintendent did not take

initial action, the second question would reveal why some other agency did take action.

The next section of the guide was applicable to the superintendent's actions after action was taken, whether by him or by other agencies. These questions concerned the superintendent's relations with his staff:

1. What preparations were made for your staff?
2. Were there formal meetings?
3. Were official plans made?
4. Were individual conferences held?

Since school principals and teachers were the people most intimately concerned with desegregation, it was felt that a section of the interview guide should be devoted to the superintendent's actions during desegregation as they related to the individual school staff. These questions were asked in the area of school staff relations:

1. What preparations were made for school personnel?
2. Did you conduct formal meetings?
3. Were official plans made?
4. What were the results of these plans?

The final section of the interview guide was designed to

obtain the superintendent's reactions to the desegregation program after desegregation had been accomplished.

1. What do you think of the desegregation program?
2. If you had to desegregate again, what changes would you make in your approach?
3. What specific action contributed most to your success?

The following questions were asked of school principals:

1. Were formal meetings held with your staff for the purpose of planning for desegregation?
2. What preparations did you make for your students?
3. What did your teachers do to prepare students for desegregation?

The citizens interviewed were persons who had worked with the superintendent and school board during desegregation. These interviews gave the citizens' views as to what happened, who initiated action, and their opinion of the success or failure of the program.

In an attempt to get answers to these questions as they were seen by participants, a review of documentary evidence was studied. This documentary evidence included school board minutes, newspaper articles, and written statements by the superintendent during

the process of desegregating the public schools.

So as to assure the anonymity of all school systems involved, actual names of school systems are omitted. The alphabetical letters assigned to systems are for the purpose of identification. The capital letters in no way refer to rank or quality of the school system they represent.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I of this study included a general introduction, need for study, statement of the problem, sub-problems, assumptions, definitions of terms, limitations of the study, related studies, methods of procedure and sources of data, and organization of the study by chapters.

In Chapter II an effort was made to describe the actions of various groups during the process of desegregation.

The impact of forces on the shaping of behavioral patterns of superintendents was discussed in Chapter III.

The effect varying behavioral patterns of superintendents had on the total process of desegregation was given in Chapter IV.

The concluding Chapter V highlighted the over-all findings, conclusions of the study, and recommendations.

CHAPTER II

ACTIONS OF VARIOUS GROUPS DURING DESEGREGATION

The purpose of this chapter is to give a description of the actions taken by various groups during the process of desegregating the public schools in the State in which this study was made. It is felt that much of the data presented in this chapter is relevant to the behavioral patterns exhibited by school administrators and affected the decisions made by them.

The Supreme Court of the United States

The historic decision of the Supreme Court in May 1954 ruling that segregation in public schools was--as a matter of public policy--unconstitutional probably was the greatest force on the shaping of behavioral patterns of school administrators. Not only did this decision remove legal sanction for segregation; it specifically proscribed discrimination in public schools.

Two basic facts emerged from the interviews regarding the decision of the Supreme Court. Superintendents now had a legal basis for discussing desegregation and the values the school system

would derive from it, and Negro parents now had a new legal approach to problems of improving educational facilities for their children.

A majority of all administrators questioned readily admitted that facilities for Negro children had been inadequate, but very little had been done to correct this situation because of a lack of funds, the ratio of the Negro to the total population, or a general laissez faire attitude toward Negro education. One white principal said, "The Negro schools here are not fit to house thoroughbred cattle in."

The decision of the Supreme Court, therefore, could be considered as a positive force in the shaping of behavioral patterns for administrators.

The reaction of citizens, parents, and teachers to the decision could be considered as factors. The reaction of these groups to the decision gave the administrators an indication of the support or opposition that could be expected from these groups in action taken to desegregate the public schools.

The school administrators in this study all used the Supreme Court decision as a starting point in the movement to desegregate the public schools. The Court's decision enabled the administrators to

move toward desegregation of the school system with a valid legal foundation that did not necessarily reveal their personal reactions to the decision.

It is inevitable that what men believe and the things to which they are dedicated will be mirrored in how they behave and in the general pattern of change in their society. The American society has been described as one which may be expected to be in a state of change at all times because its value commitments are dynamic in quality and express ideals its members are always in the process of seeking to achieve. It is reasonable, therefore, to expect that the various social and economic developments of any given age will be an active expression of prevailing values.¹

Six of the ten superintendents interviewed said they personally felt that desegregation was desirable and actively worked with their boards of education and citizens committees to bring about an early solution to the problem before pressure from opposition groups could be organized. Four of the ten considered the Supreme Court decision and discussed it with their boards of education but failed to desegregate until more immediate circumstances coerced them to desegregate. The Supreme Court's decision greatly influenced these circumstances. In two of the four systems mentioned above, Negro parents formally requested the board to comply with the

¹Truman M. Pierce et al, White and Negro Schools in the South (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955), p. 9.

Supreme Court decision. One system was ordered by local court action to desegregate. This action was in answer to litigation supported by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The remaining system of the above-mentioned four was a county system that had no educational facilities in operation for Negro children. The policy of this system was to send Negro students to city schools and pay tuition. When the city desegregated the high school, they notified the county they could no longer accept the Negro high school students from the county, thereby increasing pressure on the county to desegregate the county school system.

All of the administrators readily admitted that the Supreme Court decision was the starting point in the desegregation process. They also admitted that the decision coming from the Supreme Court had definite influence on shaping a compliant attitude because--as the people saw the meaning, the implications, and the consequences of this decision as it related to their mode of life--the people would also understand the administrator's attempts at compliance with the decision.

The superintendent of system B indicated the understanding of the decision by his patrons when he said: "There exists a great

amount of good will among the people of this town and a readiness to face the problem (desegregation) squarely and really do something about it."

The decision of the Supreme Court gave release to two external forces: compliance with and opposition to the decision. These two external forces exhibited by the school patrons, along with the personal feeling of the superintendent toward the decision, helped shape the behavioral pattern of the superintendent during the desegregation of the public schools in this study.

State Officials

The approval of the Supreme Court decision by the top State officials gave superintendents the important added legal support for initial desegregation proposals. The Governor of the State declared in 1954, "Kentucky will do whatever is necessary to comply with the law." Official recognition in 1954 by the Governor and the State Superintendent of Education of the Supreme Court decision as "the law of the land" was an important factor in establishing an air of acceptance throughout the State.

The State Department of Education released to all school districts a statement of approval of the Supreme Court decision and

asked that all local districts comply with the provisions of the Court decision. The department of education also pledged support of the entire department to any school district attempting desegregation. The Division of Instruction Services, Bureau of Instruction, annually issues a report on integration for public distribution.

Action of the State Board of Education in June 1956 asking local school boards to give "due consideration to all qualified persons applying for jobs as teachers" was generally interpreted as a move in behalf of Negro teachers who were threatened with possible job loss under desegregation plans certain to reduce teaching staffs in some, but not all, of the State's districts.

Continued encouragement of a climate of compliance by the Governor, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and other officials allowed superintendents to prepare for desegregation without going counter to State attitudes.

The refusal by both major political party candidates to make desegregation a political issue had provided the State with a consistency of attitudes on desegregation at top official level in State administration.

All superintendents interviewed stated that the approval by State officials made desegregation much easier than it would have

been without this approval.

The official view of the State Department of Education prior to the Supreme Court decision has been expressed as follows:

In a report for the period ending June 30, 1951, State Superintendent Boswell B. Hodgkin called for "laws and amendments to existing laws that will enable local school authorities to provide school services more easily to the (Negro) children in sparsely populated areas of the State. Segregation is extremely expensive where only a few Negroes live. Modification should be made to the Day Law legalizing non-segregation when school boards elect to do so."²

Boards of Education

The boards of education of the selected school systems in this study were an important group of people and became a vital factor in the desegregation of the public schools in their areas.

Until the Supreme Court ruling was announced, the boards of education in these systems had not considered the possibility of desegregation seriously, although the need for improving and equalizing the facilities at Negro schools had been the source of contention between Negro patrons and many of the boards for some years.

²Southern Regional Council, The Schools and the Court (Atlanta: The Council, 1953), p. 13.

Soon after the Supreme Court ruling, most of the boards decided with their superintendents to form bi-racial committees for the purpose of studying the desegregation problem. In one system where the school board did not appoint a committee, a committee was organized by the citizens themselves.

The primary responsibility of public boards of education is to establish policies for the official operation of the schools under their jurisdiction. Desegregation of public schools thereby became a direct responsibility of school boards. The fact that they were the governing bodies of the public schools gave the boards of education, in this study, the opportunity to exercise this right by recommending the desegregation of the schools in their systems. This action was taken by six of the ten boards of education in the school systems included in this study.

Reports from systems where administrators personally felt they had been highly successful in desegregating their schools emphasized the importance of official action by the board of education at an early date in the desegregation process and, also, the importance of an honest, sincere, and positive approach to the desegregation process. The superintendent of system J, in discussing the action of his school board during desegregation, said:

The Negroes respected the sincerity of the board and felt there was no evasion on the part of the board. The board realized that it was their responsibility as an official body to try integration. Their personal opinions might have been different, but this had no effect on the board's decision.

Following is a statement of policy released to the press by this board:

Statement of Policy of the _____ Board of Education with Reference to the Decisions of the United States Supreme Court of May 17, 1954, and May 31, 1955, on the Subject of Desegregation in the Public Schools:

Believing that respect for the law of the land is vital to each individual and to the welfare of all, the _____ Board of Education will comply with the decision of the United States Supreme Court on the matter of integration in the public schools. The Supreme Court, in its decision of May 31, 1955, places the responsibility for solving this problem on each local Board of Education. It requires that we act in "good faith"; that we "Make a prompt and reasonable start"; and that we comply at the "earliest practicable date." The _____ Board of Education does not plan any change in the operation of the schools for this present school year since the decision came too late for plans to be made.

The Supreme Court wisely directed each Board of Education to examine and study its own local situation before formulating any plans for desegregation. Hasty action could harm the program. Although the responsibility for action is placed on the Board of Education, we feel that this problem is such that all citizens must assume responsibility in its solution. Accordingly, we have directed the Superintendent of _____ City Schools to counsel with the people of both races through a series of meetings, seeking their advice and opinions through discussions in an atmosphere of calm, intelligent deliberation.

One such meeting has already been held. We hope our representative citizens will participate with the Board of Education and Superintendent in attempting to find the best solution to _____'s problems of desegregation.

Early next spring we will formally announce a plan for inaugurating integration in the _____ Public Schools beginning September 1956.

_____ Board of Education

Four of the ten school boards in school systems in this study did not follow the above pattern. One was ordered by court action to desegregate. The litigation was started by Negro patrons and supported by the NAACP. One school board delayed announcing a plan for desegregation by offering alternatives. The school board in this system was dissatisfied with the Negro school building and the academic program and considered constructing a new building. This idea was discarded because the Negro school had twelve grades in one building with three-fourths of the total enrollment composed of non-district students; and, if the county desegregated, the city board of education would be left with five Negro teachers on contract when they desegregated. The other alternative was to try to get Negro parents to allow the school board to pay transportation and tuition for the Negro students to a nearby city. These alternatives were refused by the Negro parents and pressure of court action was promised by the parents to the board unless the board complied with

the Supreme Court decision. After this position was taken by the Negro parents, the board decided to formulate plans for desegregating the public school of this system.

The two remaining school boards of the four that did not announce a plan of desegregation for the schools were similar in that neither school board operated a Negro school in the system.

Negro children were sent to the city school for Negroes. When the city board notified the county board that they would have to educate their own Negro students, the county board decided not to make any immediate plans concerning desegregating their school system. The city board notified the county board of education in March 1956 of their plans to desegregate their schools; but as late as midsummer of 1956 the county board, despite repeated pleas from the superintendent, had not made a decision to desegregate. In August 1956, just a few days before school opened, the superintendent told the board of education they would have to do something about the Negro students. The county school board had received no pressure from the Negro parents, but the superintendent had received many telephone calls from them seeking information on school plans for their children. However, on August 31, 1956, the county schools were opened to all county students. The county superintendent

called a meeting of all bus drivers and told them to pick up all Negro children and notify the superintendent and principals immediately if any trouble developed.

The fourth school board that did not announce plans for desegregating the public schools had a three-way program for educating the Negro children. This board used the laboratory school facilities of a nearby college for the training of the Negro elementary students of this county. The Negro city high school or a nearby boarding school where the county paid all expenses and the Negro children could return home for weekends were optional for the Negro students. The city Negro high school was not accredited by the State Department of Education.

The board of education discussed integration several times but never reached a decision. In 1956 some Negro parents asked for permission to enroll their children at a high school near their homes. This was the first official request by Negro parents; and, as other Negro parents contacted the board of education, the school board approved a motion to integrate all county school pupils by districts.

The school boards recommending desegregation for their schools before pressure or opposition could become an active force did so after much planning and preparation. Four of the school

boards used citizens committees effectively in the planning process. Two boards of education chose to work with the principal of the Negro school. The committees appointed by the school boards worked with the school board and the superintendent in planning and bringing a better understanding of the problem of desegregation to the people of the community. The ten school boards studied made varied approaches to the desegregation process in their school districts, but they were as one in their appraisal of the success of the desegregation venture. Each felt that he had been successful in desegregating the public schools.

Advisory Committees

The boards of education of the selected public school systems in this study used many methods to prepare the communities for desegregation. One method used most frequently was the "advisory committee." The committee members were community leaders chosen by the board of education and the superintendent to serve as an advisory group both to the board of education and to the citizens of their community.

After careful study of local environs and possible conflict situations, these committees coordinated their recommendations

with those of the board of education and the superintendent and then released a joint statement of plans for desegregation of the public schools in their districts.

The committees were bi-racial and bi-partisan. The purpose of this type of committee, as revealed by those who worked with the committees, was to gain perspective from all groups concerned. Every school official interviewed attributed much of the success of the desegregation process to the Advisory Committee.

The success of an advisory committee depended to a great extent on the amount of sincerity displayed by the school board in the appointment of the committee.

Varied approaches were used by the boards of education to effect desegregation in the public school in the selected systems. Some school boards used advisory groups of citizens in the planning stages; others did not. Those boards which did not use advisory groups felt they had been just as successful without these groups as they would have been with them.

School system H was a county system with no facilities for Negro education. The Negro elementary students attended a school at a local Negro college. The Negro high school students attended the city Negro high school or were transported to a nearby boarding

school. The Negro high school students were given an option of schools. When the city announced a plan for desegregation, the county desegregated their schools also. There was no official citizens committee working with the county school board for desegregation. There was, however, a community council composed of civic, religious, and fraternal groups with representatives from the city and county. This council considered its position on segregation. There were no Negro representatives on the council. They discussed the question and decided to integrate their own body and then ask community support for desegregation. Although this committee was not officially appointed by the county school board, it was felt that the work done by this council was helpful in the transition from segregated to desegregated schools in this county.

School system I was a small county system with no Negro schools in operation at the time of the interview with the school officials. The school board minutes contained the following statements concerning the appointment of a citizens committee:

. . . A motion was made to form a citizens committee to study desegregation in _____ County Schools in order to comply with the State Department of Education's request to comply with the Supreme Court's decision. (1955).

This committee was never formed, nor were any official

planning sessions held by the school board with any other committee. This system later desegregated with what they felt was as much success as other systems using committees.

System G was a county system under court order to desegregate the public schools. The court order was the result of litigation brought against the county school board by Negro parents.

An official copy of the school system's policy on the subject of desegregation gave the following account of committee action during the process:

A group of parents, selected by the various P.T.A.'s in _____ County met in the office of the county school superintendent March 30, 1956, at 7 o'clock p.m. to discuss and to advise the county board of education on problems concerning integration in the county schools. There were 18 representatives--17 white and 1 Negro.

It was revealed at the meeting that the county now operates _____ High School with an enrollment of 48 county students and 20 city students. Five Negro teachers are employed by the county at _____ School.

The committee recommended, after much discussion, that the high school students of _____ High School be integrated with the students of _____ County High School and that a much better program could be provided for the Negro students and that the county could save approximately \$10,000 per year.

The committee also suggested that the elementary program be studied by the _____ County board of education, and that plans be made to integrate the elementary schools as soon as the board felt it was feasible.

The Board went on record by a unanimous vote June 1, 1956, to integrate grades 9-12. No action was taken on Elementary

System F was a city system that had been accepting Negro high school students from the county. The county was ordered by a federal judge to desegregate, thus leaving the city with too few Negro students to operate the city high school. Negro parents informed the school board they would seek legal action for desegregation. The superintendent and board of education appointed a citizens advisory committee in September 1955 to study desegregation. In October 1955, the committee recommended integration of grades 9-12 and that Negro students in grades 1-8 be integrated as soon as additional space could be provided.

The superintendent of system F stated that the presence of a citizens committee prevented this system from having a lawsuit.

The committee was bi-racial, with three Negro and eight white citizens. The superintendent decided to form a citizens committee after attending an educational meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, where the use of advisory committees was discussed.

System B was located in a small city with a Negro elementary school but no high school. The Negro high school students were transported about fifteen miles to another Negro city high school. This system reported no request for desegregation was received by the board of education. This board decided that desegregation was

the only right thing to do after the Supreme Court's decision.

There was a citizens committee formed by citizens that made an attempt to pressure the board into an early start toward desegregation. This committee was formed after the board of education had started plans for desegregation. The committee recommended an immediate and complete program of desegregation. The Negro parents cooperated with the board in a refusal of this recommendation. This system desegregated in the 1955-56 school year.

System D, a city system, desegregated by recommendation of the superintendent and the board of education without appointing a citizens committee. The superintendent attempted to use the principal of the Negro school as his liaison with the Negro community. Although the schools desegregated in this community and the students had good relations, the community was torn by unrest and strife prior to and since desegregation.

The interviews by the writer with the superintendent, board of education members, and school officials revealed that there had been very little communication between the board and the citizens. The white citizens were watching the Negro citizens and students in an effort to observe mistakes that could be used to rescind the desegregation program.

Economic reprisals had been used against the Negro citizens; as an answer to this, the Negroes appealed to the NAACP to support a fight against the school board's making improvements in the Negro elementary school. The school board was expecting a court suit to be brought against it by the Negro citizens, supported by the NAACP.

A statement of policy for integration released by the city board of education closes with the statement:

The Board of Education expects to continue to abide by the ruling of the Supreme Court on segregation and work on a long range plan for its implementation in the local schools in a peaceful and acceptable manner.

System E was a large county district that found itself faced with some perplexing problems in the fall of 1954. The superintendent informed the county school board of the nature of these problems. He asked for the formation of a citizens committee to assist in solving these problems. The Supreme Court, he felt, was going to pass on integration and this would present another problem. The committee was formed early in 1955. The superintendent asked that the school board consider outstanding lay people for membership on this committee. The board of education with the superintendent chose fifteen citizens for the committee. There were twelve white

and three Negro citizens. A highly qualified educator was asked to be chairman.

The superintendent outlined three areas for this committee to study: transportation, buildings, and desegregation. The committee was to study fully all aspects of the above-named areas. When this committee was appointed, there was discussion as to whether the desegregation issue should be considered by the committee and whether the word "desegregation" should be used in connection with this committee. The board of education voted to include the word "desegregation" and to include it as a problem for the committee to investigate.

The committee met with many groups for the purpose of orienting these people to some of the problems to be faced in desegregating the public schools.

Representatives from the Farm Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce, the NAACP, and similar organizations were shown the problems to be faced in desegregation, and the committee listened to their reactions to these problems.

One indication of the effectiveness of such an approach was shown when a meeting was held with a group of NAACP representatives. Two or three were rather militant in their questions. They

asked: "Why study this problem? Just integrate." Once they were shown all the work the committee had done on population, transportation, and buildings, their attitude changed; they could see that the committee was sincere. The local NAACP chapter had a meeting with the national representatives of their organization and convinced them of the sincerity of this committee and the work it was doing.

The chairman of this committee gave the writer three steps he felt necessary for change in any society. They were an understanding of what changes are to take place, what effect they will have on people, and the degree of participation by the people involved.

There was a deliberate attempt on the part of the committee not to have any mass meetings. They felt that much more could be accomplished by talking to responsible representation from organized groups in the community. The county school board and the citizens committee agreed not to solicit any publicity.

System C was a small city system that had used a bi-racial citizens committee in 1953 to consider solutions for school problems. The duties of this committee were primarily for school improvement and not integration.

When the Supreme Court issued its decision on segregation in public school systems in 1954, the problem of segregation in the public schools affected the school system's plans for a school building program. The Supreme Court decision posed this problem for school system C: if the Negro high school students from the county stopped attending the Negro city high school because of desegregation in the county, the city school system would not have enough Negro students to maintain a Negro high school.

The committee considered the financial saving to the school system if it were desegregated, lack of accreditation of the Negro high school if county Negro students left the city system, and the text of the Supreme Court's decision in reaching a decision on desegregation of the public school system in their city.

The committee reached a decision and recommended that the city school system be composed of three elementary schools and one high school.

The committee recommended this plan for complete desegregation of the city school system to the board of education. On February 12, 1955, the board of education decided to desegregate the city school system.

School system J was a city system that had decided to

desegregate before any pressure could be applied. The superintendent felt that the key to success in this system was a year of preparation.

During the month of January following the Supreme Court's decision, the shop teacher at the Negro high school resigned. The board of education felt this was an opportunity to try limited desegregation. The principals of the white and Negro high schools were asked to arrange a schedule allowing Negro students taking shop to come to the white high school for the remainder of the year. This limited desegregation was successful.

In the fall of 1956 the board of education tried voluntary desegregation by giving the Negro high school students who so desired the opportunity of attending the white high school. Fifteen Negro students accepted this offer.

The board of education sent questionnaires to the Negro high school students to determine how they felt about the desegregation program and to determine how many Negro students planned to enroll in the white high school for the next year. When it was learned that all of the Negro students planned to enroll, the board of education made plans to close the Negro high school.

The board of education started small group meetings with a

bi-racial group. The superintendent discussed the membership of the group with the Negro and white principals. The principals chose strong community leaders. The first group included the two principals, the superintendent, a local college staff member, a mortician, and a minister. This was a very small group, but they discussed various aspects of desegregation. The first meeting was felt to be a success; the group decided to increase the lines of communication by increasing the membership. The next meeting included selected members from the interested citizens and presidents of the P.T.A.'s. It, too, was felt to be a very successful meeting.

The third meeting was planned to be a public meeting open to everyone. It resulted in a mass meeting and was, in the opinion of all concerned, almost a failure. The group meetings were helpful in establishing relationships between Negro citizens and school officials. The Negro citizens respected the sincerity of the board and felt there was no evasion on the part of the board.

The superintendents and school board members recognized a fundamental need of public education when they used the advisory citizen committees in planning for school desegregation. Individual citizens and citizen groups have rightful roles to play in

studying, strengthening, and supporting public education. The communication between school officials and citizens fostered a level of understanding of public education that was mutually profitable.

The Press

"No press releases." "We kept it out of the newspaper."
"No publicity was our policy." "We made a deliberate attempt to suppress news releases." These and many similar statements were made by persons interviewed in many of the selected school systems in this study. There seemed to be a fear of the great American industry known as the press. This seemed strange at first for people working for a social change to want to suppress the news releases concerning the progress of this social change.

In the United States, where about 97 out of every 100 persons who are old enough have learned to read, almost everyone reads the newspaper. In the United States there are about 1,800 daily and 10,000 weekly and semi-weekly newspapers. Every day about 55,000,000 daily papers are distributed in this country.³

³World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. 12, p. 5608.

When these facts were considered, the policy toward press releases held by the people in this study working toward desegregation seemed strange. But follow-up questions to these people brought to light more logical reasons for this policy than were noticed at first.

There was no fear of the press but rather an understanding that newspaper printing was a business and, for some unexplained reasons, newspaper readers seemed to prefer sensational news. The people working for desegregation in the schools did not want it to become sensational; they just wanted to complete a job they felt was their responsibility. They felt that the news in an article in the newspaper could be distorted by a false interpretation and cause unnecessary problems.

These people working for desegregation in the public schools felt they could accomplish much more by making personal contact with responsible citizens through committees and forums. These persons so contacted could assist in formulating the plans and keep conflicts at a minimum.

A good example of the attitude of school officials toward relations with the press can be seen in an account given by one superintendent of an incident that occurred the first year of

desegregation in his school system. He said: "The newspaper telephoned me for permission to send a photographer to the school to take pictures of registration. I told them they hadn't been sending a photographer to registration and I didn't see anything unusual about this registration, so I couldn't give them my permission."

Then there was the Negro principal who told a former pupil preparing to attend a desegregated school for the first time not to allow news photographers to publish a picture of her. The principal told her student that attending a desegregated school was not a personal achievement but to wait until she had made a personal achievement and then allow a photographer to take a picture for publication.

The school official felt that if any news was published it would be classed as unusual or different and that was not the desire of the officials at that time. They wanted the students to know that the new students in desegregated schools were just that--new, but not unusual or different.

Many systems released formal statements to the press; others did not. Most systems asked for and got complete cooperation from the press. Relations between the press and school officials for the most part were cordial and cooperative. One

editor's comment was: "Kids are just kids like mine. I saw no need for writing anything. If they broke my windows and it was because of race, I wouldn't print a thing." In cooperating with the school officials in printing only a minimum of news concerning desegregation, the press contributed much to the success of the desegregation process in the selected public school systems.

Pressure Groups

Pressure groups found successful operation difficult in the public school systems in this study. Only one system was desegregated by a federal court order. Negro parents asked for desegregation in two school systems and started court action in one.

The existence of pressure groups was found if one could call the unorganized resistance to and the unorganized demands for desegregation pressure group action. In a real sense, this action was the vocal reaction to a great social change and was to be expected.

Parents and Pupils

Parents assumed important roles during the desegregation of

the school systems in this study. First, by not advocating a strong resistance to desegregation or forceful demands for desegregation. This first attitude made a definite contribution to pupil reaction to desegregation.

Parents and pupils were treated together because the attitude of parents was so visibly exhibited by the pupils that it was not felt best by the writer to separate the two groups. School principals and teachers, the people who have intimate daily contact with students, reported the best of relationships between old and new students in desegregated situations.

The Negro students, prepared by their parents, went to the new schools expecting cordial treatment and found the white students, prepared by their parents, extending cordial treatment. Cordial treatment in desegregation is treatment absent of physical persecution.

All school officials interviewed were well pleased with the attitude of the Negro and white students during desegregation.

In the area of athletics, Negro students were more integrated than in any other desegregated area of school life. Most school systems observed in this study were in the second or third year of desegregation and progress could be seen in other areas. Negro

students were becoming class officers and were being allowed to assume more school responsibilities. The presence of Negro students in elective offices indicated a further insight into the vital role played by the students during the desegregation of the public schools.

Parents played an important role in the desegregation of the Parent-Teacher Associations. This organization, always a potential vital force in the operation of public schools, afforded the parents an opportunity to become acquainted with the parents of students attending school together for the first time.

Teachers

The teachers were an active force in the desegregation process. To the teacher came the responsibility of accepting new students in the classroom. For the most part the new students were coming from schools that were inferior. The problem of assisting these students to adjust to the new school, curriculum, and other school activities presented a challenge to these teachers. That they have succeeded was evident by the praise given them by the school principals. Negro parents interviewed by the writer also gave much credit to the teachers for the success of the desegregation

of the schools in this study.

A few teachers resigned from systems planning desegregation, but superintendents could not say they were resigning because of desegregation. The superintendents had no evidence to support this because the teachers would not give desegregation as a reason for leaving the system, although the superintendents involved in these situations felt this was the reason.

The Negro teachers could be classed as expendables in the desegregation process. Of the ten public school systems in this study, only three had made an effort to desegregate the teachers. Systems E, F, and G were the systems that tried integrated faculties.

School system E placed Negro teachers in desegregated schools as assistant librarian and clerk in the early stages of desegregation. Some of the Negro teachers in this system had to be persuaded to accept these positions, because they felt they were qualified as teachers and should be so accepted. In this interview the chairman of the county school board said: "The six Negro teachers who would have no students to teach were on tenure. The superintendent decided that these teachers must be kept. Of the twenty-nine Negro teachers in this county, twenty-five have a

master's degree. They were highly qualified and are doing a fine job for us."

The Negro teachers were also used to teach remedial reading. No child was forced to attend these classes. They attended only if the parents had no objection. The Negro teachers were also used to fill vacancies when regular teachers were absent. The chairman of the school board and the superintendent were favorably impressed with the Negro teachers and their ability to gain acceptance by teachers, parents, and students.

System G integrated its faculties because the Negro teachers sought legal counsel for an interpretation of the Supreme Court decision. They reported the information they obtained to the superintendent; he, in turn, informed the school board. The board of education went to the State Capitol to verify the validity of the information given to the Negro teachers. When the board of education found that State tenure laws protected the Negro teachers, they placed them in desegregated schools as assistant librarians. This was all done as a result of Negro teachers asking the superintendent what he was going to do for them. His reply, however, was that he wasn't going to do anything for them.

The superintendent of this system stated that he would

hesitate to place a Negro teacher in complete charge of a class. He felt that it would take a number of years before Negro teachers would be accepted. When talking to the high school principal, it was learned that the Negro teacher assigned as assistant librarian was in charge of art education and taught three art classes. The principal reported that the pupils liked her and cooperated with her. The principal also felt much credit was due the Negro teachers in his system for preparing the Negro students for desegregation. He gave as examples the type of clothes worn by the Negroes and the intimate knowledge of the school policies, history, and tradition they had acquired. This orientation, he felt, helped the Negro students adjust.

The Negro teacher integrated in system F was retained because she did not seek employment after it was announced in the summer that schools would be desegregated that fall. The other Negro teachers sought employment elsewhere; but, when the local paper announced the regular pre-school meeting of all teachers, she attended. The superintendent and the board decided they would place her in the high school as librarian. She met the State requirements for a librarian. Her principal felt she was doing a creditable job.

The superintendent of system C felt that maybe "ten years from now he could put a Negro teacher in a white school but he didn't believe the people would let him now." He had no evidence to support this, but he just believed it. He felt that a child has the right to attend school anywhere, but the teacher does not have that right and he would not force it on the people. He said there is no law to force a superintendent to hire a teacher and he didn't feel that he had to explain why he wouldn't hire a Negro teacher in a desegregated school.

All superintendents interviewed stated that teachers had done a creditable job in assisting students to become adjusted to new school policies on desegregation. Teachers were reported to have cooperated with school officials, students, and parents during the desegregation process.

The General Public

The citizens of the communities where the school systems in this study were located met the problem of desegregation in a manner typical of their heritage. There was some acceptance, some resistance, and some confusion. A histology of the State was once recorded as:

. . . Kentucky is neither northern nor southern, but is a hodge podge of the good and bad of both. More often than not, our southern exposure dominates even though it is easier for Kentuckians to look Northerly and sometimes like what they see.⁴

Race relations in this State, historically, are described as friendly. Prior to and during the Civil War, the State and its populace were divided on their convictions and loyalties to their State, the slave question, and the Union of the States in the war. Although generally counted as one of the thirteen Southern states classed as "Old South," Kentucky was a border state having economic, political, and social ties with liberal states on its northern border, and the same with a conservative state on its southern border. This geographical dichotomy greatly influenced the thinking of the citizens of Kentucky during the Civil War and later influenced their thinking along like channels in regard to the Supreme Court decision of May 1954 declaring segregation in public education unconstitutional.

Interviews with superintendents, school board members, principals, and teachers indicated that although a majority of the citizens in this study probably opposed desegregation, they

⁴Frank L. Stanley, Sr., "Supreme Court Edict May Be Applicable," Louisville Defender, Article 10, September 18, 1958.

recognized the authority of the Supreme Court decision, realized the value of a system of public education for all children, and respected law and order. Therefore, they were willing to accept desegregation in the public schools. Those citizens who would have chosen no education at all for their children rather than desegregation were a small numerical minority. There were a few citizens who believed that desegregation was morally right. The school patrons seemed to rely on the judgment of the duly elected or appointed school officials in the desegregation of the public schools.

No school system interviewed reported any over violence on the part of the citizenry. Protests, yes; but active violence, no. In only one system included in this study did the citizens threaten action that could have caused violence.

In system F Negro patrons refused the first plan for desegregation offered by the board of education. This plan involved the upper three grades of high school. Some Negro citizens at that time asked for complete desegregation; others asked to leave the schools completely segregated. The Negro patrons who asked for the continuation of segregated schools felt that desegregation would not compensate for the loss of Negro teachers and school social life for the Negro students. The school board denied these requests

and proceeded with their plan of desegregation. Economic pressure was brought against the Negroes. One year later the school board announced a bond issuance to obtain funds for school improvement. When Negroes learned that a portion of the money was to be spent for the improvement of the Negro school, they threatened court action for complete desegregation. The superintendent reported that the white citizens said if the economic restrictions did not work to keep the Negro quiet, they would revive the Ku Klux Klan. The superintendent said he believed the NAACP was still working in the community against the improvement of the Negro school. He also said the community was "made up of mountain folk" who were primarily on relief and opposed to integration.

The general public reacted to desegregation in a manner befitting its complexities. Some of its members gave support; some gave opposition; and some gave no visible reaction. The majority of the citizens, however, were willing to cooperate with school authorities in the interest of a continuing program of public education. Public opinion was shaped by those members of the community who were willing to work in leadership capacities.

Chapter Summary

The actions of certain groups directly influenced the progress of desegregation in the public schools.

The Supreme Court decisions of 1954 and 1955 removed legal sanction of compulsory segregation by race in public schools. The Kentucky State Department of Education issued a statement to all local school districts appealing for approval of and compliance with the court decisions. These legal developments provided a basis for school officials to plan for desegregation.

Other agencies became involved in planning and played vital roles in desegregation. These agencies were local school boards, advisory citizens committees, school principals and teachers, the general public, and parents and students.

The press and pressure groups were active only to a degree and played a lesser role than other groups.

Local school boards that gave early approval to desegregation plans made a definite contribution to a calm transition. School boards also assisted superintendents by approving the use of citizens committees. The activities of citizens committees became vital forces in fostering cooperation between boards of education and the general public.

School officials recommended no mass meetings and no press releases .

School principals and teachers accepted the responsibility of orienting the new students to desegregated schools . They assisted all students in the adjustments to new school policies occasioned by desegregation . The acceptance of desegregation by the students , parents , and general public reflected the value of careful planning by school officials .

The actions of these groups either directly or indirectly became a force in the shaping of the behavioral patterns of superintendents during desegregation .

CHAPTER III

IMPACT OF FORCES ON THE SUPERINTENDENT

In a companion study Ingram¹ identified the behavioral patterns of the superintendents in this study. By carefully evaluating the actions of the superintendents during the process of desegregating the public schools, Ingram was able to class these superintendents into four general behavior patterns. These patterns were:

Group I - Superintendents who furnished initial leadership and made careful preparation for public school desegregation;

Group II - Superintendents who initiated action without careful planning for desegregation;

Group III - Superintendents who waited for the community or other outside agencies to initiate action and who then provided formal leadership in preparing for desegregation;

Group IV - Superintendents who waited for the community or other agencies to initiate action and who made little formal

¹Sam H. Ingram, "Behavioral Patterns of Selected Superintendents During the Process of Public School Desegregation" (Unpublished Ed.D. thesis, University of Tennessee, June 1959).

preparation for desegregation.

Discussions in this chapter will attempt to show significant forces taken into consideration by superintendents who initiated action and made careful preparation for public school desegregation. The latter part of the chapter will treat the actions of the superintendents who provided little formal leadership during desegregation.

Superintendents Who Furnished Initial Leadership and Made Careful Preparations for Public School Desegregation

The superintendents who took initiating action in desegregation considered many factors in making this decision. These were individuals who recognized the Supreme Court decision as a constitutional basis for initiating action. They saw the necessity for operating the schools within the framework of the court decision; they saw the need and opportunity to improve educational opportunities for the Negro students in the system, because many of the Negro schools were unaccredited and they saw the financial problems confronting them.

The attitude of acquiescence to the court decision expressed by the State officials was an element of support for these superintendents. Superintendents in this group were not men easily influenced

by the statements of men in authority positions, but men who realized the need for licit approval and support to effect so great a change in school policy. Once the personal decision to desegregate was made, these superintendents began careful preparations to insure an orderly and communicative approach to the desegregation issue.

The superintendents identified in this category were educational leaders concerned with providing learning opportunities for all children. These superintendents were also concerned with operating the most effective school systems possible and realized the Negro schools were inadequate. These superintendents took into consideration the importance of the Supreme Court decision, State officials and the State Department of Education approval, and their personal beliefs about public education in forming the basis of their approach to the decision to desegregate.

The same quality of leadership that gave impetus to the initiating action guided the careful planning and firm policies that followed. Careful and thoughtful planning were necessary to insure an orderly approach to so controversial a problem. Every possible source of opposition had to be considered; every possible source of support had to be made permanent. Lay people had to become

informed and pledge cooperation; principals and teachers had to be included in the planning, for their cooperation was vital to the success of the venture. All of these helped create the environment in which desegregation could be worked out.

The reaction of these groups to the superintendent's proposal to desegregate often forced a revision of original plans. These changes in plans were necessary as more people became involved, more views were expressed, and more information was gained concerning the possible reaction of the community to desegregation. Throughout these changes, however, the general principles that originally directed the action to desegregate remained firmly entrenched in the superintendents. These general principles guided action toward desegregation in a spirit of "when" and "how," rather than "if."

The board of education is the policy-making body of the school system; consequently policy changes cannot be effected without the approval of the board. The first step in this orderly plan was to involve members of the board of education in discussion of the desegregation issue. This issue was presented as a possible solution to many problems the boards needed to solve. The financial saving that could be realized by desegregating the schools was

discussed. One system was spending \$2,000 annually for the education of eight Negro students. This city system did not have a Negro school but had a contract with the county system to educate these children. The cost was \$250 per pupil annually for Negro students as contrasted with \$90 for white students. The superintendent of this system cited to the board the possibility of equalizing the per pupil cost of education through desegregation of the schools. The cost of operating a dual transportation system was compared to the cost of operating a single transportation system. The board members were told the importance of giving early consideration to desegregation. This early approach was recommended to avoid litigation that might result in a court order to desegregate. The board was also told that an early solution would have the advantage of allowing all concerned to become informed by leaders concerned with the welfare of public education, rather than being informed by people concerned only with opposition and violence.

Once approval by the board was granted, discussion of the problems involved revealed the need for information and assistance from interested school patrons and a need for active and informed leadership in both groups. This led to the formation of the citizens committees. These citizens, representing many facets of life,

cooperated with and served in an advisory capacity to the superintendent and the board in formulating plans. The citizens committee was usually bi-racial and provided opportunities for members to work together for a common goal, probably for the first time.

In a recent study of bi-racial education in the South, the authors accurately portrayed the average Southerner's reaction to the Supreme Court decision as:

The average Southerner's reaction to the Court decision creates great turmoil within himself. He wishes to be a law-abiding citizen and he believes himself to be loyal to the great values which have made this nation what it is; but when he applies the test of his basic value commitments as an American to the race problem, he is made very uncomfortable and unhappy. The inner conflict which is brought on has sometimes caused him to shed his objectivity and to surrender to emotionalism.²

This reaction was generally true of members of the citizens committees at the initial meetings. These people, however, soon placed the segregation issue in its proper perspective within the complex program of developing better schools which was gaining momentum in the South. The leadership of the superintendent was a positive influence in effecting this change of attitude. When

²Truman M. Pierce et al., White and Negro Schools In the South (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955), p. 305.

these committees became informed in all aspects of segregation and its relationship to the democratic principles of public education, they were willing to assist the superintendent in the project of informing other members of the community. The success of the committees in gaining support from leaders in other areas of community life gave additional confidence to superintendents in further planning.

To sound out community sentiment further on desegregation, one citizens committee, at the request of the superintendent, planned a series of meetings with representatives of all community organizations who were willing to meet with the committee. Representatives from each organization met separately with the committee. The representatives who came to the sessions took the information back to their organization for discussion. These meetings with representatives from professional, industrial, civic, and social organizations assured the superintendent of cooperation and support from the majority of the community and a minimum of opposition from the rest of the community. This leadership did much to relieve tensions and remove irritants from both races.

Other committees used different approaches for ascertaining community reaction, but the net result was the same. Each

committee was able to convey accurately to the superintendent the possible reactions of the many segments of the community to desegregation. This information enabled the superintendents to direct adequate preparations for a diverse acceptance of desegregation.

The reaction of the school boards and citizens committees gave the superintendents the courage to face opposition from other sources. The support of the school boards and the citizens committees also gave an added incentive for further thoughtful planning.

When the news of plans for desegregation became known, inquiries were made of the superintendents and boards by both organized and unorganized groups. These groups included the general public, teachers, pressure groups, and frequently the press.

To answer the questions of these groups and attempt to work with them posed a delicate problem in human relations. These people and the ideas they espoused concerning desegregation had to be understood and considered. For the most part, all they needed was complete factual information as to why the superintendent and the board were taking this action. In all instances these situations were met with a firm and positive attitude by the superintendent.

As with the school boards and the citizens committees, the

superintendents met with the principals and teachers of the schools and explained fully the reasons for the decision to desegregate their schools. The teachers were given instructions in the proper method of receiving the Negro students. The superintendents were concerned with teacher attitudes; however, through these meetings they were able to know their teachers much better. The complete program of desegregation was explained, questions were answered, and teacher cooperation was solicited in the scheduled meetings. Teachers were asked to remain in the system; but, if for any personal reason a teacher felt he could not perform effectively in a desegregated school, he was free to seek new employment. Teachers were encouraged to discuss freely any aspect of desegregation.

One superintendent experienced initial opposition from school principals in his system. By carefully working with this group so important to individual school administration, he was able not only to gain their support in desegregation of students, but they also accepted desegregated faculties. The principals worked closely with the superintendent throughout the entire process. Negro principals were helpful in planning programs they felt would best meet the needs of the new students. The intimate knowledge of the educational background of the Negro students, their social outlook,

and their expectations were considered in planning sessions with the Negro principals.

Teachers were told to treat Negro students as new students only. Being new students, they were expected to be oriented into the school program as any new student would be. In this way the faculties of the different schools were prepared for the desegregated situation and to assist in student adjustments for the following year. Informed persons related these instructions to the success of desegregation by citing the minimum of incidents of student conflicts. The excellent work done by teachers in all schools was frequently referred to by the superintendents.

Public opinion is a powerful instrument for change or status quo if accepted from random source. The superintendents in this first category, however, strove to shape public opinion by issuing sincere statements of motives for desegregation.

Some citizens objected individually, but there was no organized move to discredit desegregation. The leadership of the superintendents tended to cause the citizens to view segregation with a new perspective. Old traditions and definitions were re-examined and new conclusions were drawn--based on rational information rather than myths. The necessity for reliable information

in decision making was ably stated by Pierce et al., who wrote:

. . . The final decision on how best to implement the court's decision depends upon the social and moral will of the American people. Moral decisions which stand the test of time and circumstance must rest upon informed intelligence. . . .³

They further stated:

. . . In order to effect means for implementing the Supreme Court's decision with considered judgment and unimpassioned reason, the people must understand the social, economic, and educational implications of segregation. The will, the heart, the intelligence can best be brought to bear upon resolving the issue of segregation if all the facts are in hand. . . .⁴

The importance of having public acceptance of desegregation was properly considered by the superintendents in this first category and much preparation was done to secure this acceptance, at least to the degree of cooperation with--if not complete acceptance of--the program.

As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, the appointing of citizens as advisory committee members was a step in the direction of obtaining public support.

The superintendents accepted every opportunity to speak with

³Ibid., p. 22.

⁴Ibid., pp. 22-23.

groups and individuals in formal and informal meetings and explain the reasons for desegregating the schools and the methods to be used in the process. The relative importance of these contact meetings can be assessed when the number of such meetings an educational leader has with citizens is considered.

Some of the superintendents released the plans to desegregate by announcements to the press. Other superintendents, through agreements with the press, released no desegregation plans.

The pattern of behavior attributed to these superintendents during the process of desegregation of the public schools characterized their actions in solving other school problems.

Superintendents frequently made statements of comparison between desegregation and school building programs or financial support programs. Some statements frequently heard were, "We approached desegregation just like we would any other school problem"; or "In any school problem we attempt to solve, we like to have all the facts, carefully consider them, work out a plan, and then proceed to rally support for the successful completion of the project. This consistency of action served the superintendents well during the process of desegregating the schools.

The superintendents whose actions place them in this behavior

pattern provided dynamic leadership during the period from segregation to desegregation. Displaying an abiding faith in the ability of an informed citizenry to solve problems, the superintendents proposed a cooperative plan of action void of coercion or force. These superintendents were able men willing to join in strengthening the march of progress. That they believed in leadership and democratic ideals was evident.

Superintendents Who Initiated Action Without Careful Planning for Desegregation

Superintendents who initiated action without careful planning desegregated the schools but encountered recurring waves of protests from several sources. Of the ten superintendents in this study, Ingram placed one in this behavior pattern.

Informed persons in this system said this superintendent acted in good faith and held the personal belief that desegregation was the only right thing to do.

If any one factor could be considered as a possible cause for recurring protest, it would probably be the lack of communication that existed between the superintendent and the general public.

Many factors probably were considered by the superintendent

when he decided to initiate desegregation in his system. Persons interviewed seemed to think this initial action of the superintendent was prompted by a personal belief of the need for desegregated schools and because of the Supreme Court's decision.

The superintendent began his program for desegregation by appealing for school board approval. He cited as a basis for his approach the Supreme Court decision, the enrollment figures at the Negro high school, and the advantages of desegregating before court action was taken. A board member said the board desegregated the high school only because

" . . . a future drop in enrollment at the Negro school would leave it below the minimum State requirement for a senior high school. The school was unaccredited by the State because of the small enrollment. We didn't desegregate the grade schools because the white grade schools were on double shifts due to a classroom shortage. The other reason was to avoid court action."

The superintendent seemed to have considered only the school board and school principals in his original planning sessions. He probably felt the involvement of citizens would create opposition, rather than acceptance of, desegregation. A possible result of the lack of careful planning was the lack of understanding that was shown by Negro and white citizens.

The school board released a brief statement to the press

stating that the high school would be desegregated. A large group of Negro parents met with the board and registered a protest over desegregation; they protested because Negro teachers were to be fired. The board proceeded with desegregation plans without the assistance of a citizens committee or formal meetings with the general public.

The majority of the white citizens were opposed to desegregation and seemingly could not understand why action was taken to desegregate the schools. A group of first-grade mothers met with the superintendent and asked why he didn't send all Negro students back to their school so the white children could get a full day's schooling.

The majority of the Negro citizens approved of desegregation because of the school program at the desegregated school. The former high school for Negro students did not offer course work in science, business, or vocational education. The firing of five Negro teachers became the basis of protest to desegregation by a group of Negro parents. They felt the benefits of desegregation could not compensate for the loss of the teachers. Another group of Negro parents protested on the basis of complete desegregation of all grades, not just the high school. Each group had a vocal leader

to foster their cause. The superintendent recognized the Negro principal as the leader of the Negroes and sought his advice on all matters pertaining to desegregation and the Negro community. This was probably the reason for the lack of communication between the superintendent and the Negro citizens. The general feeling of unrest among citizens was still present the third year of desegregation.

Despite evidences of protest to desegregation from the community, everyone concerned verified the fact that good relations existed between the students in classes and athletic events. The Negro principal spoke with pride of the scholastic achievements of his former students at the desegregated school. In sports, Negro players earned three positions on the varsity basketball team and a Negro was elected captain of the local football bowl game.

The superintendent of this system had faced the problem of desegregation and decided on a constructive course of reconciling the divergent forces of the community that would slow--if not halt--this constructive pattern. If the forces that shaped the decision to desegregate will continue to operate and recognize the need for constructive plans to further the initial goals of desegregation, informed persons believe that much of the confusion will be removed.

Superintendents Who Waited for the Community or Other
Outside Agencies to Initiate Action and Who Then
Provided Formal Leadership in Preparing
for Desegregation

The superintendents Ingram placed in this behavioral pattern were cognizant of the presence of forces supporting the legal status of desegregation and forces opposing the enactment of desegregation. The difference between these men and the superintendents in the first behavioral pattern discussed earlier in this chapter was one of value placement. Whereas the superintendents in the first behavioral pattern considered the implications of the Supreme Court decision and the statement of request for compliance from the State Department of Education as a basis for approaching desegregation, the superintendents in this behavioral pattern did not. Although each of the three superintendents in this behavioral pattern discussed desegregation with their school boards, no decisive plan of action was adopted until initial action was taken by the community or other agencies.

The degree of leadership exhibited by these men in gaining support of their school boards was at first considered a factor, but in two of the situations this factor was later discredited when further investigation revealed the evasive methods used by the superintendent

and the board to avoid desegregation.

With one exception these men seemed to place more value on community sentiment, personal acceptance, and school board rapport. The bonds of fear or inertia that held these men relatively inactive could have been the result of many factors.

These superintendents in discussions with their boards for approval of desegregation cited only the Supreme Court decision and the State Department support of the decision. They did not include the cost of financing a dual system, the inadequacies of facilities, or moral reasons for desegregation. In discussions with the school board, one superintendent assisted the board in its effort to find an alternate solution to desegregation.

In one case the Negro parents had petitioned the school board several times before the Supreme Court decision of 1954 for improvements for their school. The board minutes of April 21, 1955, referred to their latest request as follows:

. . . _____ PTA group met with the board and offered written recommendations for the improvement of the school curriculum. Some were to restore Chemistry, Physics and Geometry; provide Band instruction, Art, Physical Education teacher, Manual Training, Library facilities and night football facilities.

Instead of using the inadequacy of school facilities as a basis for gaining support of desegregation, the superintendent in 1955

approached the Negroes in a meeting and asked them to consider sending the children to a nearby city at the expense of the board. Facilities for Negro students were supposedly better in the nearby city.

During this period the Negro citizens in this system had been conferring with a Negro lawyer; and the board, fearing a lawsuit by the Negroes, appointed a bi-racial committee in an effort to prevent this.

The superintendent of this system, by not taking a positive stand and not performing his official duty as an educational leader in a controversial issue, compromised personal principles. He intimated that as a Christian person he realized desegregation was inevitable, but his actions during the initial stages of desegregation did not exhibit this belief.

A superintendent who had no Negro schools in his system was asked by Negro parents in the late summer of 1956 to desegregate schools. He replied, "No definite plans have been formed as yet. When we decide, we will let you know." When the city system where the Negro students from this system were attending school announced they would be desegregated for the 1956 school year, some Negro parents telephoned the superintendent and asked again

for desegregation. His answer to the second request was the same as for the first.

Meanwhile, several events were occurring. The teachers voted unanimously for desegregated classes, the community council of clubs solicited community support, and the board discussed desegregation and went on record as approving the State Department of Education's request for compliance with the Supreme Court's decision. The events listed above could have provided a setting for initial action by the superintendent, but hesitancy on the part of the superintendent allowed the Negro parents to take initial action in desegregation.

The one superintendent Ingram placed in this behavioral pattern who did not initiate action for the same reasons as the superintendents previously discussed seemed to share leadership with the board of education. This superintendent had discussed desegregation with the board after the Supreme Court's decision and, although no official plans were made, the board and the superintendent felt they would desegregate.

A citizens committee was formed by citizens for the purpose of formulating plans for desegregation when no official action was taken by the superintendent. This committee invited the

superintendent to a meeting and submitted a plan calling for an immediate start. The plan was not accepted by the superintendent. The action of the committee aroused the board to the interest of the citizens in desegregation. The board with the superintendent later made plans to desegregate the high school.

The chairman of the school board stated that there was no animosity on the part of anyone concerning desegregation.

The three superintendents placed in this behavioral pattern did not take initial action to desegregate schools but did provide formal leadership in planning for desegregation after the initial action was taken by other agencies. The superintendents worked with members of their staffs in planning general policy. These plans in some instances included consolidation of schools for more efficient operation. Dual transportation systems, formerly segregated, now were one, thereby creating a financial saving. Superintendents worked with principals in preparing the teachers for desegregation. However, the majority of the work of informing students of new policies was done by principals and teachers.

The general public either cooperated with the planning or was tolerant. In one system the superintendent appointed a citizens committee to assist in some planning, but generally the citizens did

not assume a major role in planning for desegregation in these systems .

The fear of community reaction and the desire to maintain friendly relations with the general public seemed to have played an important part in the refusal of these superintendents to take initial action . A definite lack of leadership ability was also exhibited in their refusal to perform official duties in a controversial issue . After initial action was taken by Negroes and the community seemed tolerant , these men assumed their roles as educational leaders and assisted in planning . This would seem to indicate the importance of public opinion to them and the fear of jeopardizing their social position in the community .

Superintendents Who Waited for the Community or Other Agencies to Initiate Action and Who Made Little Formal Preparation for Desegregation

One similarity the two superintendents in this behavior pattern shared with superintendents discussed previously in this chapter was that they , too , discussed with their boards the question of desegregating the schools . These discussions , however , led to no official action until Negro parents resorted to legal measures to

initiate action. The questions remain: How much leadership ability was exerted by the superintendent in his efforts to gain support from the board? How sincere was he in his efforts? What were his personal convictions on the question? The answers to these and similar questions could be obtained only from the superintendent. Since these answers were not forthcoming, one alternative was an observance of the superintendent's actions during this period.

After discussing desegregation, the superintendents and the boards pursued a policy of "wait and see; if no one requests desegregation, then the problem is solved."

The reasons given for not taking official action that were discussed in the section just prior to this will also hold true for these superintendents. They were men not easily convinced to assume leadership roles in controversial issues. The superintendents, however, went farther in their respect for community reaction; they failed to assume any responsibility for planning for desegregation after the initial action had been taken by Negro parents.

Desegregation was started as a result of a court order resulting from a suit filed by Negro parents in one system. The other system was desegregated because of the absence of an alternative.

The refusal of a city system to accept Negro county students forced this system to desegregate. There were no Negro schools in the county.

The respect these superintendents had for desegregation was displayed by the way they allowed school personnel to muddle through the intricate problems involved in desegregating a school system. There were no formal meetings with faculty members on desegregation. Preparations pertaining to student participation were not made for either group of students. No formal community preparations were made to cope with acceptance or rejection of desegregation. One system desegregated the weekend before school opened on Monday. The superintendent made no official announcement to the public. Negro parents were contacted and told to have their children at the bus stop. School bus drivers were called to a meeting and told to pick up all children and take them to school. The principal was notified, but teachers and students had no official information concerning this until Negro students arrived for the first day of school.

Some of the results of this lack of planning were highlighted in an interview with a Negro parent. This parent felt that students and teachers would have had a better relationship with Negro students if some planning had taken place. Referring to desegregation, she

said, "It's difficult for children to do without preparation what we adults have not been able to do in a lifetime with preparation." School principals reported few problems but indicated that some planning would have made the adjustment easier.

Desegregation procedures should operate in a manner conducive to gaining the confidence and continued respect of all persons interested in public education. To attempt to desegregate schools without careful planning is an unnecessary risk that should be carefully avoided.

Chapter Summary

The impact of different forces in the shaping of the behavior patterns of the superintendents in this study was discussed in this chapter. It was evident in the discussion of action taken and possible reasons for this action that there was a wide range of differences between the operational patterns of the superintendents. Some assumed leadership roles throughout the process of desegregation, while others did not.

The four superintendents who furnished initial leadership and made careful preparations for public school desegregation made a direct approach to the problem. In attempts to secure support and

cooperation from the school board, they cited many advantages to be derived from a prompt and reasonable start to desegregation. They referred to the Supreme Court decision and the State Department of Education's approval of the decision when they sought school board approval for desegregation. When the board approved desegregation, the superintendents in this behavioral pattern then made plans that included school personnel and school patrons participation in general planning sessions for desegregation of the schools. The superintendents in this behavioral pattern provided leadership throughout the process of desegregating the schools in their systems.

The one superintendent who initiated action without careful planning was reported to have acted in good faith in taking initial action to desegrate the schools but to have failed to consider the community resources in making final plans for desegregation. If any one factor could be considered as a possible cause for recurring protests of desegregation from the public, it would probably be the lack of communication that existed between the superintendent and the general public. The superintendent seemed to have considered only the school board and school principals in his original planning sessions.

The three superintendents who waited for the community or

other outside agencies to initiate action for desegregation were not successful in obtaining school board approval for desegregation. Two of the three superintendents in this behavioral pattern seemed to place more value on community sentiment, personal acceptance, and school board rapport than they did on plans for initial action to desegregate. The one remaining superintendent who did not initiate action seemed to share leadership with the board of education.

The two superintendents who waited for the community or other agencies to initiate action and who made little formal preparation for desegregation discussed with their boards the question of desegregating the schools, but no official action was taken until Negro parents resorted to legal measures to initiate action. These superintendents were not willing to assume leadership roles in controversial issues.

CHAPTER IV

THE EFFECT OF VARYING BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS ON DESEGREGATION

The actions of various groups during the process of desegregation of the selected public school systems have been discussed in order to show important influences exhibited during this period. These influences, when seen in relation to the behavioral patterns of the superintendents in the selected systems, should give certain indications of the effect of the behavior of an effective educational leader in the formation of school policy. It is evident, however, that the findings will be greatly affected by the processes utilized as a basis for judging the data. The purpose of this chapter is to determine the effect varying behavioral patterns of superintendents had on the desegregation process.

Systems in which extreme difficulty and violence occurred were not included in this study. Only systems expressing a desire to cooperate were included.

The kinds of influences varying behavioral patterns of superintendents had on desegregation were determined by compiling the results of actions taken by the superintendents during the process

of desegregating the public schools. The four types of behavioral patterns identified by Ingram were organized into two general classes for the purpose of determining the effect the behavioral patterns had on desegregation. The two general classes of influence were (1) the influence that a positive type of leadership gave to the desegregation program, and (2) the influence that a wavering type of leadership gave to the desegregation program.

The public school superintendent is the official educational leader of the school system. The operational beliefs of superintendents will be reflected in the approach made to problems encountered. It is logical to assume that operational beliefs will be different with different people. This being true, the approaches made by a number of superintendents to a similar problem will vary according to the variance of beliefs of the superintendents. Many other factors will also either directly or indirectly affect the behavior of the superintendent faced with the task of desegregating the public schools. The cooperation of the board of education, school staff, community, and students must be obtained in desegregating schools as well as any other problem affecting the learning process.

One of the essential functions of the school administrator is to provide leadership toward the cooperative formulation of educational policy in the community. The

success of the school leader in achieving democratic educational leadership in the community is fundamentally dependent on his ability to operate in consistency with this point of view. The cooperative formulation of educational policy is the common concern of all lay and professional people in the community.¹

Also:

The contracts between the school board and its employees are made largely through the superintendent of schools. He is and should be the chief employee because he is the board's executive officer as well as the spokesman for the staff that serve under his direction so far as the school operations are concerned.²

Another duty of an effective superintendent has been stated as follows:

It is his duty to advise the board on the need for new policies or the modification of existing ones relating to the administration and operation of the schools.³

Some of the above statements characterize a few of the duties or characteristics of an effective superintendent.

Positive Leadership

The aforesaid statements give emphasis to a positive type

¹Harlan L. Hagman, The Administration of American Public Schools (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1951), p. 3.

²Charles Everand Reeves, School Boards (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954), p. 256.

³Ibid., p. 235.

of leadership--a type of leadership that is willing to work with people in seeking a solution to problems rather than work for people in evading problems .

There were superintendents in this study who gave this positive leadership to their communities . These were the men who initiated action to desegregate with a full realization of the action and reaction to be expected from the people involved . The courage that sustained these superintendents in their skirmishes with opposing forces was a vital aspect of positive leadership .

The positive leadership displayed by these men gave those working with them a basis for an intellectual approach to desegregation . These superintendents were educators who realized that the school was not the only educational agency in the community and that they were in the best position to coordinate the efforts of all agencies having educational responsibilities . They organized and utilized every aspect of the community in seeking a cooperative solution to a problem affecting the school as well as the community .

The approach to desegregation made by these superintendents instilled confidence in those who were in doubt as to the timing , application , and outcome of desegregation . A committee member in one system said:

When I went to my first meeting I had my doubts about everything concerning desegregation. When I left some of the doubts had been dispelled. I was willing to work toward desegregation. There were so many good reasons why it should work that I was willing to give it a fair trial. When our superintendent gave such logical reasons for trying desegregation, I saw the possibility of it working.

This positive type of leadership, while instilling confidence, also fostered a sense of cooperation among members of different racial groups. The calm, assured approach to desegregation was noted by observers as being a vital factor in keeping all important lines of communication open between white and Negro people in the community. Frequently persons being interviewed would comment on the attitude of the Negro concerning the superintendent's actions. A typical statement was:

The Negro did not press for desegregation. They knew that whatever the final outcome was, the superintendent was sincere in his efforts and had done his best.

The renewed community interest in public education that resulted from involving people of the community in solving the problem of desegregation could become a vital force for future progress of schools. The people involved in planning for desegregation will feel a personal responsibility for assisting in the implementation of these plans. This was evident in statements made by superintendents noting an increase in P.T.A. attendance and participation.

When initial action for desegregation was taken, the positive leadership that was important in the initial stages gained importance in the vital planning for the transition to desegregated schools. The planning followed the pattern established in the early stages of the desegregation process. This pattern included representatives from the community and the school. The involvement of the community helped create the environment in which non-segregated school policies could be worked out. Thoughtful planning and firm policies advanced by the superintendent lessened the effectiveness of programs of opposition.

One of the more important aspects of positive leadership is the high regard for legal rather than extralegal procedures in seeking solutions to problems. The decision of the Supreme Court presented a challenge of principles to these superintendents. They felt that superintendents and school boards had a responsibility as an official body to comply with the Supreme Court decision. These superintendents and school boards had a responsibility as an official body to comply with the Supreme Court decision. These superintendents desired to maintain a recognition of law, order, and purpose in their school community.

The positive type of leadership exhibited by these

superintendents is not to be confused with the traditional concept of a leader--the leader who exhorts, coerces, or manipulates people into a blind followship. The positive type of leader sees that leadership is diffused among all and is a characteristic of the citizen in action. Leadership is an emerging quality that springs from any active citizen or citizen group working for the fulfilment of creative activity. Many examples in which citizens exhibited leadership behavior were cited by these superintendents.

The superintendents who took a firm positive position on desegregation made a definite contribution to community progress. The actions of these men during the desegregation of public schools provided opportunities to be discovered in working with others. People of different racial groups met together and cooperatively planned for the transition from segregated to desegregated schools. The cooperative planning and active cooperation of representative groups in the community was part of the program envisioned by the superintendents to insure a smooth transition to desegregation, free of open friction or violence.

The behavior of the superintendent in desegregating the schools had a far-reaching effect on the entire process, especially in determining the direction desegregation would take. The

proposal to make the desegregation program a forceful, active, and well-planned program was one of the first steps taken by the superintendents. The sincerity of approach was helpful in obtaining school board and community support. The superintendents were able to foster a cooperative atmosphere in communities where minimum, if any, activity of organizations dealing with intergroup relations existed. Some immediate advantage to desegregation derived from the influence of superintendents exhibiting a positive type of leadership could be seen in the type of acceptance and accord with desegregation.

Teachers and students in desegregated schools gave evidence by their actions of following the directives of the superintendents given them in earlier meetings.

The superintendent whose positive type of leadership fostered a cooperative climate for desegregation were those superintendents who took initial action to desegregate and made careful plans for desegregation.

A principal made the following statement concerning the leadership of one superintendent: "Our superintendent was a thinking man of action. Without his leadership and planning, we could never have accomplished what we did."

The forthright approach made by these superintendents encouraged interested laymen and professional personnel to work together in seeking a solution to the problem of desegregating the public schools. The influence of these superintendents on the desegregation process was far-reaching. The fortitude and ingenuity exhibited by these superintendents in their legal approach to desegregation was significant in gaining support for the enactment of the desegregation program.

In order to determine the kinds of effects varying behavioral patterns had on the desegregation process, the actions of superintendents were divided into two general types: (1) those who exhibited a positive type of leadership through all phases of the desegregation process, and (2) those who exhibited a wavering type of leadership, either in some or all phases of the desegregation process.

The positive type of leadership and the kind of effect it had on desegregation has been discussed above. The following section of this chapter will treat the kind of effect the wavering type of leadership had on the desegregation process in the school systems included in this study.

Wavering Leadership

The superintendents exhibiting this type of leadership did not oppose desegregation; on the other hand, they did little to encourage the community or the schools to seek a solution to the problem presented by desegregation. In most situations the environs of community settings were comparable to those where superintendents gave positive leadership. The wavering leadership displayed by these superintendents, however, soon changed this setting and tended to create an air of confusion and presented difficulties in organization for an orderly approach to desegregation. The few abortive attempts to desegregation were emotional in nature and ended in more anxiety for all involved.

There were attempts to foster compromise plans admitting the inequalities of existing school facilities but evading desegregation by offering a "just as good" segregated plan. All compromise plans--rather than helping to ease tensions--created more tension and provided irritants to both races. The delaying tactics employed by these superintendents provided a setting for extremists and radicals to operate. This element of extremists did not gain control, however, due to an inability to organize.

When the superintendent did not take a positive stand on desegregation and offer suggestions for resolving conflicts, the effect on desegregation was one of confusion. Negro parents became impatient and used the threat of court action in some instances. In other situations, Negro parents felt that even after schools were desegregated the actions taken by the superintendent during the desegregation of the schools were instrumental in determining the degree of acceptance of Negro students by school personnel and students. One Negro parent with reference to the lack of leadership said:

The way the superintendent and school board handled desegregation let everyone concerned know that they didn't approve of it. There was a lot that could have been done to make it better. I feel the teachers and students could treat the Negro students much better than they do. We have had trouble on the school bus, too. There just didn't seem to be enough preparation or planning done.

This statement was from a parent where the system was desegregated the weekend before school opened on Monday. There were no advance meetings of pupils or teachers for the purpose of planning for desegregation, and this parent felt that if the Negro students had been expected to enroll in the white schools, the students and teachers would have had time to make some preparations, or at least have had time to include thoughts of desegregation in

opening day plans. The superintendent allegedly was prevented from making any plans by the school board.

Some immediate disadvantages of a wavering type of leadership to desegregation were observed in the visits to these systems. One disadvantage was the anxiety and confusion caused by indecision. When no statement of positive action was issued from the superintendent's office, Negro citizens felt the board was evading the issue or delaying action. This caused them to lose confidence in the administrative personnel. White citizens by the same token gained new hope for possible avoidance of desegregation. Teachers and students could make no official preparation for desegregation. Citizens were not involved in committee meetings with school personnel for desegregation planning purposes. The general feeling was that desegregation might not occur.

When it was apparent that desegregation would occur, people did not have time to reorient themselves to the point of complete acceptance. There was a decided difference in the attitudes of citizens in systems where they worked cooperatively in planning with the superintendent and board and the attitudes of citizens in systems where the superintendent had made little or no preparation for desegregation.

As reported by parents, Negro students were skeptical of teachers' attitudes toward them in systems where there had been a lack of leadership by the superintendent. This was in direct contrast to reports of parents in systems where superintendents had taken initial action and made careful preparations for desegregation.

The behavioral pattern of the one superintendent who took initial action and made little formal preparation for desegregation alienated the support of citizens. School personnel and students seemed to be operating effectively in desegregated schools, but only a semblance of effectiveness was found in the community school operation.

The interviews with informed people in this system indicated that the superintendent and school board felt that the "less said and more done" where desegregation was concerned was the better method, whereas the community felt that "too much had been done without enough being said" concerning desegregation.

The failure to establish direct lines of communication with community leaders for the purpose of explaining the desegregation program created a rift in school-community relations. Negro citizens suspected ulterior motives were involved in every move the

school board made. There was no evidence to support the concept of the superintendent held by whites or Negroes, but--with no clear explanation of policy from the superintendent's office--speculation of motives and actions was distorted.

Evidence was presented outlining a planned program of desegregation, but this was not available to the public until two years after the desegregation program was enacted. Even then it was given only to those who asked for a policy statement.

The statement of policy contained answers to many of the questions concerning desegregation that were causing unrest among Negro and white citizens. This lack of information by the public subjected the superintendent and board to continued attacks by the uninformed public.

The actions of the superintendent during desegregation showed a sincerity of purpose and a balance in planning. The inability to maintain lines of communication with the community through community leaders, forum discussions, citizens committees, or other media seemed to be the major failure of the planning program for desegregation.

Chapter Summary

The influence varying behavioral patterns of superintendents had on desegregation was as varied as the behavioral patterns. The behavioral pattern of superintendents who took initial action and made careful preparations for desegregation was influential in establishing a calm, intelligent, and cooperative approach to desegregation in the public schools of Kentucky.

The behavioral pattern of superintendents who initiated action without careful planning for desegregation provided a disturbing air of confusion and passive opposition within the community. The failure to involve citizens in planning and to formally release plans from the superintendent's office gave incentives to doubt the sincerity of motives and direction of the program.

Superintendents who neither initiated action nor made formal preparation for desegregation were unable to provide the leadership that was necessary for the assurance of an effective program of desegregation.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In Chapter II the forces that shaped the superintendents' behavioral patterns were discussed. These included the forces that were active during the period of desegregation.

The influence of these forces was felt by the superintendent when action taken or pressures extended by these forces either assisted or delayed his planned program. These forces singly or in groups either directly or indirectly represented a majority of the community and its support or opposition.

Where these forces were most active the majority gave the superintendent needed support. The most important groups appeared to be the school boards who gave approval to the superintendents' plans, the State officials, and the advisory citizens groups. The Supreme Court decision was the primary influence in the State of Kentucky as well as in other states desegregating schools under the provisions of the decision.

The Supreme Court decision formed the legal basis for the superintendents' support of desegregation, but without school board approval the desegregation plans of the superintendents were of no

avail. School boards were the policy-making bodies for the public schools in this study, and their approval of desegregation gave the superintendents the opportunity to formulate plans for an effective program of desegregation.

The State officials were an important force in shaping behavioral patterns of superintendents. The approval of desegregation by the Governor of the State and the public statement made by him to this effect were important factors in establishing a favorable official climate in which educational leaders could operate in their efforts to remove compulsory segregation from the public schools. The most important State approval, however, came from the State Department of Education. This department appealed to all local school districts to go on record as approving the Supreme Court's decision and also asked for compliance with the decision from the local school districts. This proved a strong talking point for superintendents in their initial approach to the school boards for approval.

Some systems used advisory citizens committees as an aid in planning for desegregation. These committees were used effectively for liaison between school officials and the community. The ideas and plans submitted by these committee members who were

community leaders gave the superintendents a much broader view of community responses to desegregation. The superintendents attached much importance to the work of the citizens committees. The citizens committees were bi-racial and for the most part bi-partisan in their personal feelings toward desegregation. The committee served as an agency to assist superintendents and boards. The primary purpose of these committees was to assist in informing the public of school board plans and bringing back to school officials the reaction of the public to these plans.

The behavioral patterns of different superintendents with regard to the press were similar. Whether a desegregation program was being enacted or delayed, the superintendents released only a minimum of news to newspapers. Publicity seemed to be a complex, rather than a simple variable. Many superintendents asked the local editor to cooperate with school officials and release only a few statements concerning desegregation. Superintendents reported good cooperation from most editors so contacted.

There were no successful operations of organized pressure groups found in the communities where desegregated schools were located. Attempts had been made to organize groups for support of and in opposition to desegregation, but these attempts failed to have

any adverse effect on the planned program of the superintendents.

Teachers were an active force in the desegregation process. Superintendents freely praised the exceptional work done by the teachers, not only in preparing their students for the change in school policy, but also for the interest taken by the teachers in assisting students to adjust to the desegregated schools. Three of the ten systems had desegregated teaching staffs. Superintendents who had not attempted to desegregate teaching staffs stated that they were afraid their people were not ready to accept the Negro teacher. They cited no evidence to support this statement.

The general public reacted to desegregation of the public schools with some acceptance, some resistance, and some lack of concern. There was no overt violence in the opposition to desegregation in the school systems included in this study. Interviews with informed persons indicated that probably a majority of the citizens were opposed to desegregation, but they were willing to accept it because of the Supreme Court decision on segregation in public schools, a realization of the value of a system of public education for all children, and a respect for law and order. The general public seemed to rely on the judgment of the duly elected or appointed school officials during the desegregation process.

Chapter III attempted to assess the impact of forces on the shaping of the superintendents' behavioral patterns. The significant forces taken into consideration by superintendents during the desegregation process were discussed. It was noted that superintendents who furnished initial leadership and made careful preparation for public school desegregation operated within a framework of values consistent with a democratic approach to problem solving. They accepted their roles as educational leaders of their communities and approached the problem of desegregation as a school problem that needed solving. They recognized the authority of and attempted to comply with the Supreme Court decision on compulsory segregation in the public school.

The superintendent who initiated action without careful planning for desegregation was successful in obtaining approval from the school board for desegregation, but the lack of careful planning was shown to have caused much confusion and unrest among citizens. The lack of communication between school officials and the community appeared to be a vital factor in the opposition to the acceptance of desegregation.

Superintendents who waited for the community or other agencies to initiate action were unwilling or unable to provide

leadership for the desegregation program. Some were unsuccessful in obtaining school board approval for desegregation, while others cooperated with the board in attempting to delay action for desegregation.

In Chapter IV the influence of the superintendents' behavioral patterns on the desegregation program was discussed. The superintendents who furnished initial leadership received cooperation and support for desegregation plans. The opposition they faced was softened by the sincerity of the superintendents' approach to desegregation, the firm policies, the legal approach, and careful plans. Determining the amount of influence a superintendent's behavioral pattern had on desegregation was a difficult task. It was noted that in the school systems where the superintendent was an active leader and took initial action for desegregation and made careful plans, desegregation was accomplished in a relatively calm and peaceable manner. The acceptance by the school board and citizens of these superintendents' plans for desegregation enabled the behavioral pattern of the superintendent to exert quite an influence on desegregation. Further, there was a continuing process of acceptance to and extension of original desegregation plans. This was not completely true in the systems where superintendents did

not provide active leadership in initiating action for desegregation.

Conclusions

As was stated in Chapter I, this study was designed to be a guide for superintendents who may in the future be engaged in desegregating public schools. There were similarities and uniformities in the experiences of systems in the processes of desegregation and of resistance to it. The complexities of forces at work in each system were significant, as were the forces that worked for stability and for change. For this reason, the lessons of experience in any one system can never be applied in detail to another system, but there are common principles that may apply to many situations. Therefore, it is felt that each system going through the process of desegregation can and should meet its problem in its own way. This study and similar studies that describe leadership action, behavioral patterns, and significant impact of forces during the process of desegregation can be used effectively in planning sessions for others.

Through a careful analysis of the findings, the following conclusions were reached:

1. Positive leadership and a positive approach by the

superintendent fostered an atmosphere of cooperation and calmness in the communities.

2. The approval of desegregation by the State Department of Education and State officials and the appeal made by this department to the local school districts for compliance with the Supreme Court decision gave superintendents support for their plans for desegregation.

3. The process of desegregation proceeded more smoothly when it was the total effort of school and community.

4. Hostility on the part of citizens was reduced when information from the superintendents and the citizens committees led to understanding and knowledge of the complete program of desegregation.

5. Lines of communication that existed between the school officials and the community played an important role in desegregation.

6. Many people shared in the leadership of an effective program of desegregation. Leadership was shared by the superintendent, school board, principals, teachers, citizens, and students.

7. The majority of the superintendents provided adequate, careful, and thoughtful planning for an effective program of desegregation.

8. The behavioral patterns of superintendents had a definite effect on desegregation processes.

9. Superintendents generally avoided use of the press as an interpretative medium. When the press was used, material for publication was released directly by the superintendent. The press releases were generally in the form of announcements of school policy changes.

10. Where positive leadership was exhibited, superintendents made decisions with honesty and sincerity.

11. In systems where superintendents did not take initial action for desegregation, acceptance of the program was not as complete as in systems where superintendents did make initial preparation for desegregation.

12. Citizens committees were utilized to help feel the community pulse and provide a means for people to participate in the process of planning. They were also used to seek out complaints that school officials would not ordinarily be aware of in the early stages of planning.

13. Where desegregation has been tried, the outcome has been initial acceptance or eventual acceptance. The degree of acceptance has enabled schools to operate with a minimum of

conflict.

14. Vocal resistance by citizens did not always indicate that overt or violent opposition would follow.

15. Where faculty integration was tried, it was accepted by teachers, parents, and students. This acceptance usually followed a period of cautious observation by those concerned.

Recommendations

From the evidence gathered and the conclusions reached from the data, the following recommendations are made:

1. Further study should be conducted where desegregation has been accomplished in a relatively calm manner. Many variables that contribute to a successful program of desegregation can be explained in a manner that will prove beneficial to school officials facing desegregation in the future.

2. The State Department of Education should give approval and support for desegregation within the State. The approval of desegregation by the State Department of Education and State officials will enable superintendents to enact a program of desegregation without being in opposition to attitudes of State officials.

3. A well-planned program of desegregation should include faculty integration. The integration of teachers would provide bi-racial experiences for all students. The positive benefits students would derive from teacher integration would more than compensate for the extra planning that would be necessary to accomplish this part of the program.

4. Superintendents should give firm positive leadership in attempts at desegregation. The type of leadership exhibited by the superintendent determines to a degree the amount of acceptance and cooperation a program of desegregation will receive from the public.

5. A careful and comprehensive planning program should be conducted before desegregation is attempted. Careful planning will help systems attempting desegregation to become aware of many areas where opposition might be met.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SUPERINTENDENTS

Initial Action:

1. Who made the initial preparations for desegregation?
2. Why was this action taken?
3. What was the nature of this initial action?
4. When was this action taken?

Staff Relations:

1. What preparations were made for your staff?
2. Were there formal meetings?
3. Were official plans made?
4. Were individual conferences held?

School Personnel:

1. What preparations were made for school personnel?
2. Did you conduct formal meetings?
3. Were official plans made?
4. What were the results of these plans?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR OTHER PERSONNEL

- I. Who initiated the movement toward public school desegregation in your system?
 - A. State Department
 - B. Local groups or organizations
 - C. Individuals
 - D. Others

- II. What specific action did the superintendent take with each of these individuals, agencies, or groups who were interested in public school desegregation?
 - A. Individual conferences
 - B. Public meetings
 - C. Other

- III. Exactly what part did the superintendent play in desegregating the public schools in your system?
 - A. Strongly encouraged
 - B. Encouraged
 - C. Discouraged
 - D. Strongly discouraged

- IV. Prior to the decision which was made to desegregate public schools in your system what specific action, if any, did the superintendent take concerning desegregation with the following:
 - A. His administrative staff?
 - B. His school board?
 - C. His teachers?
 - D. The public?

- V. After the decision was made to desegregate the public schools in your system what specific action, if any, did the superintendent take concerning desegregation with the following:
 - A. His administrative staff?
 - B. His school board?
 - C. His teachers?
 - D. The public?

- VI. After desegregation had begun in your system what specific action, if any, did the superintendent take concerning desegregation with the following:
- A. His administrative staff?
 - B. His school board?
 - C. His teachers?
 - D. The public?

APPENDIX C

EXCERPTS FROM MINUTES OF THE BOARDS OF EDUCATION

System A

July 14, 1955

The problem of integration was discussed at length with no decision of immediate action taken. The expressed concensus of those members present was that we should move toward desegregation at an early date, and that a committee be appointed to study the problem.

August 4, 1955

There was present a committee of citizens previously named by the chairman of the Board of Education and the Superintendent to study with the board the problem of desegregation. This committee passed a resolution on the motion of _____ seconded by _____ that the committee itself favored and would recommend that the _____ City Board of Education open its doors to Negro children residing in this school district for the school year of 1955-56 and thereafter.

August 10, 1955 (call meeting)

This meeting was called for the purpose of hearing a Negro committee on the problem of desegregation. After a very thorough discussion of the issue the committee passed a resolution recommending that the _____ City Board of Education open the doors of the _____ City schools to the Negro children living in the _____ city school districts.

A motion was made by _____ seconded by _____ that the board accept the recommendation of the two committees on desegregation and open the doors of the _____ city schools to only those Negro children residing in the _____ school district. All present voted in the affirmative.

System B

No official entry in Board of Education minutes.

System C

February 13, 1956

After much discussion it was decided by the board to integrate the High School and abolish the Negro High School.

Summer 1958

Integrate elementary schools by zoning the town.

System D

September 1958

The _____ City Board of Education in order to set forth in the minutes of the board of education its present and future plans for implementing the Supreme Court's decision concerning desegregation of the schools of the city of _____, hereby records its past and future plans.

The present Board of Education took note of the fact that integration was started voluntarily in the _____ city schools without any pressure from any group in grades 10, 11, and 12 in the _____ High School in the school year 1956-1957.

The Board expects to continue integration in grade nine (9) as soon as the two new elementary schools are completed and _____ Junior High can be renovated and re-lighted.

The Board will continue integration in grades seven and eight as soon as it deems it advisable and a schedule can be put into effect.

The Board will continue to plan for integration as it seems best for the school district. It appears to the Board of Education that _____ Junior High School will continue as an elementary school center even after complete integration of the schools of the city.

The Board of Education expects to continue to abide by the ruling of the Supreme Court on segregation and work a long range plan for its implementation in the local schools in a peaceful and acceptable manner.

System E

February 15, 1955

It was moved by _____ and seconded by _____ to appoint a special advisory committee on policies concerned with school buildings, pupil transportation and desegregation. There was discussion as to whether the desegregation issue should be considered by the committee and whether the word "desegregation" should be used in connection with this committee. The vote on this motion was an affirmative one.

January 1956

Superintendent visited the Cincinnati, Ohio, Public Schools to observe desegregation in operation and to confer with school officials on various aspects of desegregation.

July 1956

The resolution on segregation adopted by the State Board of Education was read by the Superintendent to the Board of Education.

System F

March 1, 1955

The board moved to abandon _____ High School. Letters were sent to five Negro High School teachers telling them they were no longer needed.

April 8, 1955

A contract was made between the city and county for the county to operate the Negro High School. The contract was made for the 1955-56 school year.

April 21, 1955

Negro PTA group met with the board and offered written recommendations for the improvements of the school curriculum. Some were restore Chemistry, Physics, and Geometry. Provide band instructions, Art, Physical Education teacher, Manual training, Library Facilities and night football facilities.

August 11, 1955

Statement of Policy:

1. Recognizing the contract with the county and stating the intention of the board for the Negro pupils to attend the school.
2. _____ Board was studying with a citizens committee the feasibility of integrating in 1956.

September 8, 1955

The board approved sending some Negro pupils to _____ at their request because they wanted subjects not offered.

September 14, 1955

Appointed a citizens advisory committee to study desegregation.

October 13, 1955

Committee Report:

Recommended integration of grades 9-12.

Recommended that colored students grades 1-8 be integrated as soon as additional space could be provided.

June 14, 1956

The board approved Negro students attending summer school.

July 12, 1956

The board empowered the superintendent to study the feasibility of housing all Negro pupils in grade 1-8 both city and county in the old Negro school.

September 13, 1956

A principal for the Negro elementary school was appointed. This was necessary because the county schools had integrated and only left Negro elementary pupils in the city segregated.

December 6, 1956

A discussion of possible integration of Negro pupils in the first eight grades was held by the board. The board agreed that the policy as recommended by the citizens committee was best.

February 14, 1956

The board discussed the possibility of operating the Negro school with only three teachers for six grades with the seventh grade attending desegregated classes.

May 9, 1956

Further discussion of February 14, 1956, discussion. No decision reached.

June 13, 1956

A motion was made and carried that Negro pupils in seventh and eighth grades be integrated and first six grades be taught by three teachers.

System G

A group of parents, selected by the various P.T.A.'s in _____ county met in the office of the _____ school Superintendent March 30, 1956 at 7 o'clock p.m. to discuss and to advise the county Board of Education on problems concerning integration in the county schools. There were 18 representatives--17 white and 1 Negro.

It was revealed at the meeting that the county now operates _____ High School with an enrollment of 48 county students and 20 city students. Five Negro teachers are employed by the county at _____ school.

It was also revealed that the county operates three elementary schools with an enrollment of 145 students and employing six Negro teachers.

The committee recommended, after much discussion, that the high school students of _____ High School be integrated with the students of _____ County High School and that the _____ High School be discontinued. It provided for the Negro students and that

the county could save approximately \$10,000 per year.

The Board went on record by unanimous vote June 1, 1956, to integrate grades 9-12. No action was taken on Elementary.

The Board went on record unanimously approving the consolidation of _____, _____ and _____ Negro Elementary Schools at _____ School located in _____, _____.

System H

September 10, 1956

A Motion was passed to integrate all pupils in the system by school districts.

System I

1955

A motion was made to form a citizens committee to study desegregation in _____ County Schools in order to comply with the State Department of Education's request. Nothing was done however.

August 31, 1956

Opened all county schools to all students in the county.

System J

Regular Meeting - June 16, 1955

The matter of desegregation was discussed at length. The

Board requested that the Superintendent meet with the group of Negro representatives and have a discussion of a plan, then throughout the year hold a series of meetings with members of the Board of Education and representatives of both races to work out a plan.

September 1, 1955 - Call Meeting

The chairman of the Board of Education called a meeting to be held in the office of the superintendent of schools on Thursday, September 1, at 1:00 P.M. for the purpose of making a statement of policy in regard to the May 17, 1954 decision of the United States Supreme Court on desegregation. Members present were _____, Chairman; _____, and _____. Also present were _____ and _____.

Upon motion of _____, seconded by _____, a resolution was adopted by the unanimous vote of the members present.

October 13, 1955 - Regular Meeting

The matter of desegregation was discussed at some length. _____ reported some of the conclusions obtained at the second meeting and the board considered various possibilities concerning the manner in which desegregation might be effected.

December 8, 1955 - Regular Meeting

There was some little discussion on desegregation and it was decided that the chairman should call a special meeting soon in order to give undivided consideration to this matter.

January 12, 1956 - Regular Meeting

At this time, the regular business having been dispensed with, the board took up the matter of desegregation. At least two hours was spent in discussion and studying a map which had been

worked out by the Director of Pupil Personnel giving the location of the colored children according to school districts. It was decided that after getting more information on the map, including white children also, the board would hold a special meeting for further discussion.

February 27, 1956 - Call Meeting

The _____ Board of Education was called to a special meeting on Monday night, February 27, by the Chairman _____ for the purpose of considering desegregation in the _____ Public Schools. Those present at the meeting were: Chairman _____, _____, _____, and _____. _____, also _____, Superintendent.

Mr. _____ asked Superintendent _____ to serve as acting secretary of the board and then presented to the members of the board the following resolution in writing:

All _____ Public schools will be opened henceforward to all races in accordance with the rulings of the Supreme Court of the United States. Enrollments at each school and transfers between schools without regard to race will be accepted wherever classroom space exists. Wherever any class room shortage may appear, temporary preference will be given to the previous enrollees and procedures at the school, and additional class room space will be provided as fast as the location and extent of needs and the financial means can be developed. Both the high schools will be continued for a while to test the use of both and give employment to teachers at both schools.

Chairman _____ urged the adoption of this resolution. There was considerable discussion. However, no motion was made to adopt it.

Mr. _____ moved that the superintendent be directed to ascertain through the teachers at _____ High School whether the parents of eligible children in that school desire to enroll them in that high school for the term of 1956-57. Mr. _____ seconded the motion. During the discussion Mr. _____ stated that he felt it would be useless to attempt to get such information since these parents had probably not made up their minds yet. He stated that he was opposed to such a motion. The motion carried unanimously. Superintendent _____ then requested in the above

motion stating that he felt a legal form would be necessary. Mr. _____ then dictated the following form which was reread to the board and accepted by it:

Both city high schools, if operated next year, will open to all races under the ruling of the Supreme Court of the United States. If enough students are enrolled in _____ High School for the 1956-57 school year, the _____ Board of Education may decide to continue this school. If you desire to enroll your child (or children) in _____ High School for the school year 1956-57, enter the names below and sign.

March 8, 1956 - Regular Meeting

The matter of desegregation was then discussed. Mr. _____ asked the secretary to reread the statement presented by Mr. _____ at the last meeting. After considerable discussion, Mr. _____ moved the adoption of the following resolution:

_____ public schools will be open henceforward to all races in accordance with the rulings of the Supreme Court of the United States. Wherever any class room shortage may appear, temporary preference will be given to the previous enrollees and procedures at the school, and additional class room space will be provided as fast as the location and extent of needs and the financial means can be developed. Both high schools will be continued for a while to test the use of both and give employment to teachers at both schools.

It is not the intention of the board to change the status of _____ pending the clarification with the _____ heirs of the racial restriction on _____.

Mr. _____ seconded the motion which was adopted unanimously. Mr. _____ was asked to give the statement to the press the following day.

March 11, 1957 - Regular Meeting

_____ High School:

Mr. _____ stated that a decision concerning _____ High School would have to be made at this meeting in order to notify

any teachers who would not be re-employed before April 1. After studying the facts brought out by Mr. _____ in his report and after exhaustive consideration of any possibility of continuing _____ High School, ____, _____ moved that the _____ High School be abolished at the close of the 1956-57 school term and that the four high school teachers, . . . , be notified that their jobs would be discontinued. Mr. _____ seconded the motion and it received the aye vote of all members. ____, _____ moved also that ____. _____ by notified that her services would no longer be needed because it would be necessary to retain the teachers who are on continuing contract and use them in the positions in the elementary schools. Mr. _____ seconded the motion and it was adopted by the aye vote of all members.

The members of the board expressed their deep regret that such action had become necessary and requested the secretary to write each teacher thus affected and express their appreciation of their years of valuable service to the schools and the regret of the board.

(Note: Mrs. _____ was afterwards re-employed when it was found that enrollments justified the need of another teacher.)

Report to the Board - March 11, 1957

Excerpt from Mr. _____

I gave enrollment cards to the city pupils in the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades at _____. These cards were to be signed by the parents of the children designating the high school they would enroll in for the 1957-58 school year. Of the thirty-nine pupils enrolled at present in what would be the four years of high school next year, twenty-one have indicated they would enroll in _____ High School, two have not decided, and three lost the enrollment cards so that leaves thirteen definite enrollees for _____ next year.

APPENDIX D

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL PROBLEMS

The purpose of this Committee is to study certain special problems faced by the _____ County Board of Education and to report to the Board the results of such study.

Three particular problems have already been mentioned by the Board--buildings, transportation, and desegregation. To study these problems and other closely related problems, the Committee will need to set up some guide lines and ways it wishes to work. For example, some questions immediately arise.

1. Should desegregation be studied as a separate problem or should it be studied in relationship to or as an outgrowth of the other problems?

2. What aspects of the problem should be studied? For example, see page 2.

3. How should the Committee attempt its study? For example, as an entire Committee or in sub-committees? How are individual communities to be involved?

4. What resources (information and persons) will be needed? For example, staff members of the superintendent's office?

5. What will be our policy on publicity or news items?

- 6. How will the Committee report to the Board?
- 7.

Population

- 1. What are the population trends of the County?
- 2. Who is going to school? Ages, grades, drop-outs, handicapped.
- 3. Where are the homes and children?
- 4.

Some Statements to Serve as a Basis for the Formulation of Recommendations to the _____ Board of Education

Some General Principles

1. Respect for the law of the land is vital to each individual and to the welfare of the community. Each person does not have the right to be the sole judge of which law or laws he will obey; were this situation to prevail, the foundation of our way of life would soon erode.

2. The public schools, considered increasingly essential to our democratic society and our community, must continue to make progress in their services to all children and the entire community. The solution to any issue should not weaken the services presently

provided.

3. The basic question of desegregation is one of "When?" and "How?" rather than "If?"

4. In formulating policy on desegregation, it is important to hear from key persons and groups. These individuals and groups should be helped to know the facts and alternatives and to face the problem that school people and the community must face.

5. Once a policy decision is made, the public statement of policy should be clear, decisive, and unequivocal. The policy should not be greatly elastic by providing loopholes but it should be administered sympathetically. The school board which "back-tracks" merely because of initial protests will ultimately find more difficulty rather than less, although recognizing no policy is perfect and some modification, for cause, should be possible.

6. A policy should avoid any intentional favoritism, subterfuge, or evasion.

7. In making, and carrying out the policy communication is most important, particularly across racial lines. It is important that means of communication--discussion groups, panels, news items on progress--be established.

8. The school personnel are key people in how effectively a

policy may be carried out. Successful desegregation can not be predicted unless the school board, the school administrators, and the staffs of the schools believe either that desegregation is right or that no other honorable and just choice is feasible.

9. School desegregation is a community problem, not exclusively one of the schools.

With these principles in mind and after careful study covering pertinent information concerning the _____ County public school system, the Advisory Committee recommends:

1. That desegregation of the _____ County schools be effected by the opening of the school year 1956-57.

2. That this policy of desegregation by September, 1956, be made in public statement by the County Board of Education as early as possible prior to September 1, 1955.

3. That a planned preparation program be activated through the administrative staff with the staffs of the schools, the pupils, the parents, and community groups.

4. That all school personnel directly affected by the policy on desegregation be retained and assigned on the basis of merit, preparation and experience without reference to color, race, or creed.