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# Analysis of the Assistant Principal at Johns Hill Middle School

Craig E. Milligan

*Eastern Illinois University*

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ANALYSIS OF THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

AT JOHNS HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL  
(TITLE)

BY

CRAIG E. MILLIGAN

FIELD STUDY  
~~XXXXXX~~  
**THESIS**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Specialist in Educational Administration  
IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1982  
YEAR

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ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL AT JOHNS HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL

BY:

CRAIG E. MILLIGAN

B. S. in Ed., Illinois State University, 1973

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ABSTRACT OF A FIELD STUDY

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Specialist in Education at the Graduate School  
of Eastern Illinois University

CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS  
1982

## Introduction

The improvement of teaching and learning is a foremost function of the middle school assistant principal. An important factor in determining the success or failure of a middle school is the ability of the assistant principal to lead the staff in the improvement of the school's curricular programs. Working with individuals and groups of teachers to improve staff relations is a demanding job that requires the assistant principal to develop a broad set of skills and various attitudes.

Educators who do not understand the behavior of children will be in a very unfavorable situation. The assistant principal who does not effectively help the staff develop a better understanding of the nature of children will have to correct this difficult concern.

The assistant principal who can effectively help the staff develop a better understanding of the children will find fewer problems. This will allow the staff to devote more time and energy to teaching the children. Helping the staff understand the behaviors of children must be one of the assistant principal's chief concerns.

## Statement of the Problem

This field experience study will attempt to answer the question: How can the middle school assistant principal improve the relations of the staff to better teach the children?

### Need for the Study

Administrators involved in improving staff relations in the teaching of children will find this field experience study beneficial in their approach to this concern.

### Purpose of the Study

This field experience is to assist the school administrator, especially the middle school assistant principal, in improving staff relations in the teaching of children. One objective of education today is to help students to live a productive and satisfying life. The school must recognize the differences of the students. It is the obligation of the administrator, the middle school assistant principal, to help the staff understand these unique students for the purpose of teaching these children.

As assistant principal of Johns Hill Middle School in Decatur, Illinois, this field experience study will focus on one middle school and one assistant principal. The study will examine the relationships of this assistant principal and the concerns of improving staff relations at Johns Hill Middle School.

### Delimitations

The following delimitations are appropriate for this field experience study:

1. This study examines the role of assistant principal with respect to improving staff relations in the teaching of children.
2. This study examines the role of the teacher with respect to improving staff relations in the teaching of children.

3. This study examines the role of the beginning teacher with respect to improving staff relations in the teaching of children.
4. This study examines the role of the teacher aide with respect to improving staff relations in the teaching of children.
5. This study examines the role of the substitute teacher with respect to improving staff relations in the teaching of children.
6. This study focuses on one assistant principal, Craig E. Milligan, and one school, Johns Hill Middle School, in Decatur, Illinois.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express appreciation to his wife, Sarah, and son, Todd, for their patience and understanding during this project. Appreciation is also expressed to Dr. Donald Smitley and Dr. Gerhard Matzner for their assistance and cooperation.



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## CHAPTER I

### STATEMENTS CONCERNING THE PROBLEM

#### Introduction

Staff relations focuses on the professional staff and attempts to provide the means for the total staff to meet the social, intellectual, and personal needs of the students. All students see these needs as essential to their goals in life. Staff relations provides for improvement in the human relationships of all students in their respective educational environment.

The school's curriculum involves all those experiences that the individual receives while enrolled in the educational system. The educational system requires that these experiences be organized. The teaching staff is expected to change with innovations and perform in the classroom to the best of their abilities. It is the assistant principal at the middle school who is charged with this supervision. This building administrator is responsible for improving the curriculum and aiding the teaching staff in their teaching.

The improvement of teaching and learning is a foremost function of the assistant principal. An important factor in determining the success or failure of a middle school program is the ability of the assistant principal to lead the staff in the continuing improvement of the school's curricular program. Working with individuals and groups of teachers to improve staff relations is a demanding job that does require the assistant principal to develop and possess a broad set of skills and attitudes.

Educators who do not understand the behavior of children will be in a very unfavorable situation. The assistant principal who does not effectively help the staff develop a better understanding of the nature of children will have to correct this difficult concern.

The assistant principal who can effectively help the staff develop a better understanding of the children will find fewer problems. This will allow the staff to devote more time and energy to teaching the children. Helping the staff understand the behavior of children must be one of the assistant principal's chief concerns.

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6. This study focuses on one assistant principal, Craig E. Milligan, and one school, Johns Hill Middle School, in Decatur, Illinois.

## CHAPTER II

### ROLE OF THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

The middle school assistant principal must become more involved in his respective school's total educational programs. He must be willing to participate in planning, decision making, supervision, and evaluation. Staff relations is an area requiring prime concentration and attention.

The assistant principal is in a unique position between the building principal and the faculty. It is of vital importance that he act as a liaison between top management and staff. He can be most effective in helping others develop more positive attitudes by his own personal example. Daily conduct and interactions with people do provide a wholesome attitude that can be reflected on other individuals. He can offer direction and assistance in the classroom examinations of staff needs. This administrator is charged with working with the faculty to ensure effective planning, teaching, and evaluation of the students.

The role of the assistant principal in the middle school today is demanding. By carrying out the specific duties with efficiency, the administrator should be freeing himself and the building principal to encounter other tasks. It is necessary that communication be free-flowing between the assistant principal and the principal. The building principal is to be kept informed daily. The assistant principal must

daily update the principal concerning matters of consequence. The principal can be forgotten, therefore, time must be budgeted to bring information to the principal's attention.

Communication with staff is vital to the efficient operation of the middle school. Notes, memos, and personal conferences are all necessary and effective. Staff or faculty meetings and department meetings are effective avenues in communicating with groups of the teaching staff. The assistant principal should always leave a note or personally stop and visit a teacher about the disposition of a student problem. A complaint that many teachers have is that the administration does not follow through a situation and give feedback to the staff. The teachers' concerns can often result in lower morale. The assistant principal should meet with the entire teaching staff for the purpose of showing the staff that their varied interests and problems are of genuine concern to you and the other administrators in the building.

The middle school assistant principal serves in many capacities in helping the troubled students. Two areas used at Johns Hill Middle School are examined: advisor and arbitrator.

#### Advisor

The opportunities for advising and counseling are endless. The assistant principal can do much or little depending on the pupil conflict. The classroom teacher, teacher aide, and substitute teacher are often too busy to deal with many student problems. Therefore, the student is referred to the office for behaviors outside the norms of the classroom setting. The student is labeled as misbehaving.

A student who is continually referred to the office by classroom teachers, teacher aides, or substitute teacher for behavior or any

disruptive problem probably has a more serious problem. Often, after talking to the student, the assistant principal will realize that the problem is one that is outside the realm of school, but effects the student's behavior while at school. The solution may require parent conferences and referrals to community agencies. These problems may never be solved, but the student will know that the assistant principal and school are supportive and caring.

If the administrator-student interaction is to be effective, the student must feel like the assistant principal cares about him as a person. It is easy to be in a hurry to get to something else and short change the student with whom you are dealing. If the assistant principal is interested in helping each student referred to him, then he must take the time to listen to what each student has to say. If the administrator is genuinely concerned, the student will know.

#### Arbitrator

Often the assistant principal is in a position between the teacher, teacher aide, or substitute teacher and the student who has misbehaved in the classroom. This is a common situation for the administrator. The administrator should make sure the staff is aware of his feelings about student conduct in general.

It is important to always remember that the students have rights, also. Sometimes the teacher, teacher aide, and substitute teacher go too far in the enforcement and punishment of classroom standards. The assistant principal who tries to defend the actions of this staff member when he is at fault does a great injustice to the student as well as that staff member. Both parties should be asked to evaluate the situation and be shown where each could have improved their own respective behavior.

When the assistant principal finds himself in a situation where the staff member has made an error in judgment, it is the duty of the administrator to inform the teacher, teacher aide, or substitute teacher how he mishandled the situation. By examining the situation with the staff member, that staff person may be made more aware of what the administrator expects from him before the problem arises again. It will aid the actions of other staff and their handling of classroom problems and the expectations of the assistant principal's involvement.

It is not possible or realistic for teaching staff and the students to be equal. The assistant principal in the final analysis owes the professional staff support and allegiance. But, the administrator must be supportive of both faculty and students. The students must be respected for what they have to say. It is necessary for all students to feel that what they have to say will be taken into consideration. By developing a procedure for fairness, the entire faculty and student body will better understand and respect each other in times of conflict and disruptions.

#### Assistant Principal--"Team Member"

Communication is vital for the administrative group to be effective. All the administrators of the building must be kept informed on all major issues. All need to understand the process of problem-solving and decision-making. The principal, of course, has the final word, but input from all administrators is necessary and valuable.

The assistant principal is assigned specific responsibilities. It is necessary that these responsibilities be realized and understood by the entire staff. The assistant principal must have the freedom and authority to make decisions relative to the scope of his assigned



responsibilities. He needs support from the other building administrators to best carry out the duties of his position.

Promotion of personal and professional growth among the team of administrators is important. Open discussion of professional ambitions are vital if the administrators are to show growth toward these defined goals. The assistant principal needs input from the other administrators in his growth of professional maturity.

#### Conclusion

The assistant principal should observe the behavior of children for the purpose of better understanding these children. The middle school is more than a building where subjects are taught. The middle school is also a place where children learn to live a more satisfying and productive life. All children have the right to attend middle school. It is the obligation of the assistant principal to help the teaching staff understand each of these children.

## CHAPTER III

### EXAMINATION OF THE TEACHING STAFF

#### Experienced Teacher

There are two types of teachers employed in the middle school today: the subject-matter centered teacher or student centered teacher.

#### Subject-Matter Centered or Traditional Teacher

Those teachers who can be categorized as subject-matter centered or traditional are well-prepared in the subject material for a specific curriculum area. This teacher has developed appropriate methods of instruction for that subject. Generally, a prescribed curriculum has been established on the entire district level. The subject-matter centered teacher is charged with the implementation of this curriculum. Content is planned, organized, developed, and presented to the students in a sequence according to the curriculum. The textbook is the primary source of information. The objectives of each unit activity are defined in terms of predetermined levels of mastery of specific content. Evaluation is carried out by the classroom teacher. This teacher has the expertise to determine the extent each goal has been achieved by each student.

#### Student Centered or Resource Teacher

Those teachers who can be categorized as student centered or resource teacher are focusing on effective learning. The assumption

made by this group of teachers is that the student will learn what he experiences. Learning activities involve the student in many experiences which help him find success and achievement of established goals.

The learning activities are real-life experiences. A problem-solving approach is utilized. Content from a subject area is thoroughly examined to find solutions to current problems and situations. Group work is often utilized since many real-life problems are commonly shared by most of the students. The students work together in attempting to develop a solution to the specific problem of the task.

Learning experiences are sequenced with the concerns of the children. The content selected comes from a variety of sources, primarily from subject-matter areas. Students participate with the teacher in planning, developing, and evaluating each learning activity. The goal of this approach is to allow the students to make use of knowledge to solve problems in the environment around them.

#### Comparison of Teacher Types

The assistant principal is concerned with developing a well-rounded program that can adequately meet the needs of all the children. It is necessary that the middle school not limit itself to only one approach of educating young people. Obviously, the most prevalent type of teacher is the traditional subject-centered staff member. But, the resource teacher in the student centered area adds another dimension in the instruction of children.

The assistant principal should recommend the types of teachers needed for the middle school. Communication is vital with the principal, directors of education, and personnel office. Various types of teachers are necessary to meet the vast needs of the children.

Students need assistance with the basic functions of a subject or the mastery of a skill. For many students the traditional, or subject-matter centered teacher is adequately prepared to reach the basic needs of the students. For many other students the resource, or student centered teacher is better prepared to personalize the child's learning process to meet the basic needs of the instructional programs.

#### Conclusion

Much attention must be given toward utilization of the type of teacher to best meet the needs of the diverse student population. The assistant principal is charged with the task of staff development for the basic improvement of instruction in the middle school.

Planning is the essential factor for effective supervision of staff regarding instruction. Adequate budgeting of time of the assistant principal's day is necessary in order to spend the most time on the task of supervision of teaching staff. Without planning a constructive program of supervision the assistant principal cannot be efficient and effective.

### Beginning Teacher

The function of instructional supervision is concerned with many facets: curriculum, materials of instruction, facilities, and equipment. The professional staff of the school comprises the people who are the concern of supervision. It is the staff of professionals which make the instructional programs what they are. Much attention must be given to beginning teacher behavior in terms of what the administrator believes it should be in any given situation. It is the responsibility of the middle school assistant principal to give orientation to the beginning teacher.

One of the first responsibilities of the assistant principal to the beginning teacher is to make him feel that he is wanted. Making a beginning teacher welcome includes such things as talking with him before the school year starts, greeting him the first morning, and introducing him to members of the teaching staff. The assistant principal should take responsibility for introducing the beginning teacher to all members of his teaching department prior to the first staff meeting. The confidence of the new staff member is increased when the administrator takes time to make him acquainted with others. A long conference is staged between the beginning teacher and the assistant principal in which the beginning teacher gets an impression of the sincere, warm welcome of the administrator. Many difficulties of the beginning teacher, now and in the near future, may be made insignificant because of this positive and favorable greeting.

A beginning teacher must have complete knowledge of the conditions of employment. During the interview for employment, the new employee will have certain questions about the school, but many items were not discussed as a necessary part of the interview. These unmentioned items

are extremely important to the operation of teaching. The beginning teacher will need to know the length of the school day, when he is expected to arrive, how long he will remain after school, where the teachers eat, what special services are available in the school system, and how to go about securing contracted benefits of employment. Probably the most important information that the new employee needs is when to expect his pay check and how he will receive it.

Another responsibility of the assistant principal to the beginning teacher is to give him a feeling of confidence in himself. Even though the teacher may have been successful in a previous job, he will probably have frustrations about being able to achieve the same success in the new job. The administrator can help the beginning teacher by reaffirming the confidence felt in the employee when he was hired. This can be accomplished by mentioning some of the previous successes the beginning teacher has had, and showing a genuine pleasure in having such skill added to the teaching staff.

Another responsibility of the assistant principal is to give the beginning teacher a feeling of pride in the middle school. To do this involves giving an understanding of the background of the school, its past achievements, and the goals for which it is striving. If the school organization does not make the person proud of it, then the administrator has not done his job.

The assistant principal must be concerned about helping the beginning teacher make a successful adjustment to the community of the school. Lack of success in learning to live in the community will prevent the teacher from making a maximum contribution to the classroom. Assisting the new person with ideas of available housing will aid in this

transition period. Getting started on the job means getting a sense of belonging in the community as well as learning the procedures of the school.

An orientation for beginning teachers should be programmed on the building level and on the department level. This activity gives much valuable information and a feeling of belonging. The assistant principal should provide the beginning teacher with helpful information on curriculum, policies, and procedures of the school district. A teacher handbook serves this purpose.

#### Conclusion

It is the primary responsibility of the assistant principal toward the beginning teacher to make him feel wanted, give him a feeling of confidence in himself, give him a feeling of pride in the school, and make him adjust successfully to the community. Pre-school planning conferences and orientations are utilized to serve these purposes. It is of utmost importance that individual attention is necessary to properly handle the unique wants and needs of the beginning teacher.

The administrator, himself, can best deal with this task. It is the responsibility of the assistant principal. The goal is to alleviate all anxieties and assist the beginning teacher in every possible way.

### Teacher Aide

For the past several years there has been an increase in teacher aides appearing in Johns Hill Middle School. Some of this increase can be attributed to the influence and financial support of the federal programs, but also the teacher aides have emerged as a valuable resource in the middle school. The aide has assumed a supportive role serving as a helper to the teacher in a number of activities, including instruction. His role in instruction is to be limited to tasks that emphasize the nature of his assignment.

Sometimes the teacher aide, with abilities, warmth, and energy can be much more effective in creating a positive learning environment than the classroom teacher. Such individuals are capable of gathering the necessary knowledge and skills which makes them good teachers in the educating of the children. The assistant principal is charged with supervision of the teacher aide.

Aides can be trained in relatively short period of time in order to carry out their assigned tasks, effectively, without harming the children involved in the learning process. The assistant principal must coordinate with the department chairman the appropriateness of a learning curriculum for aides.

The assistant principal can best support the active instructional role of the teacher aide by encouraging the more talented and interested to seek additional training to secure teaching positions in the school system. Many teacher aides gain interest and enthusiasm while having practical experience in the middle school. It is possible that one motive of the teacher aide is to pursue a more direct instructional role in the middle school as a result of his/her experience.



### Conclusion

The assistant principal must support the utilization of the teacher aide in the instructional roles in the middle school. The teacher aide is effective in teaching children in the regular classrooms and in special remedial classrooms. It is also financially advantageous to integrate the teacher aide into the middle school in the more active roles of educating the children. Teacher aides have proven themselves in the classrooms at Johns Hill Middle School.

It is the responsibility of the assistant principal to plan, coordinate, supervise, and evaluate the teacher aide in the middle school classrooms. Development of the teacher aides provides positive benefits with respect to the teaching of children. Often this vital and integral staff member is overlooked and not given adequate attention and supervision.

### Substitute Teacher

The assistant principal of the middle school is responsible for the substitute teacher program. He is charged with securing an adequate supply of stand-by staff to serve as substitutes. In order to develop an efficient program and procedures for assigning substitute teachers, the assistant principal can summarize teacher absence records and arrange in advance, whenever possible, for a substitute.

Most substitutes begin their service with little knowledge of the rules and regulations of the middle school. Most substitutes have little teaching experience. Therefore, an orientation session is most effective in instructing substitutes in their duties and responsibilities. It is important that information concerning the rules and regulations of the middle school be provided. A substitute handbook can be developed for this purpose.

The following information should be provided for each substitute:

1. A schedule of classes and teachers' rooms.
2. A floor plan of the building indicating classrooms, cafeteria, rest rooms, office, stairways, and other specific features of the school.
3. Procedures for fire and severe storm drills.
4. Procedures for assemblies and special events.
5. Student handbook with listing of school rules.
6. Introduction to the department chairman of the curriculum area.

A packet supplied by the assistant principal should be given to the substitute teacher upon arrival to the middle school building. The following materials should be in the substitute teacher packet:

1. Key to the room.
2. Lesson plans.
3. Seating charts of each class section.
4. Teacher schedule of subject and classroom.
5. List of conduct rules for classroom.
- 6.. Copy of textbooks and workbooks with teachers manuals.
7. Teachers schedule of extra duty assignment.

The assistant principal should make it a point to visit the substitute teacher's assigned room during the day to check that all is going well. If the substitute needs assistance, then the assistant principal is helpful in fulfilling any requests for help. It is good human relations to praise the substitute teacher and comment that he is vital to the efficient operation of the middle school this day when the regular teacher is absent.

Role expectations that are not clearly defined may cause problems for most substitute teachers. Administrators, regular teaching staff, and the substitute teachers all have different role expectations regarding

the role of the substitute teacher. The assistant principal must realize this potential conflict and act accordingly to remedy all the problems that might develop.

Administrators do not often take the necessary time to work with the substitute teacher. Most administrators would like to see the substitute teacher maintain an orderly classroom with the minimum of problems directed to the office. Too often the administrators are satisfied if the substitute teacher merely plays the role of babysitter and maintains good classroom management. The assistant principal must guard against this passive attitude. Time must be budgeted for the staff relations with the substitute teacher.

The regular teaching staff views the substitute teacher in a different way. They expect the substitute teacher to keep the classroom intact, follow lesson plans directly, and maintain good classroom discipline without giving busy-work assignments. The regular teacher often does not want the substitute teacher to do too favorable a teaching job or the students will not appreciate the regular teacher when he returns to the classroom.

The substitute teacher's perception of the role appears to be based on the fact that he is considered a second-class teacher. The coolness that the substitute teacher receives by the regular teaching staff reinforces this degrading perception. The lack of positive feedback from students, teachers, and the administration accounts for low job satisfaction.

One major problem encountered by substitute teachers at the middle school is the tenseness with which they are treated by the students. The students are anxious in the fact that the regular teacher is absent and that the classroom will not be normal. If the substitute teachers meet this anxiety with strict discipline, resentment builds with the students

and confrontations may occur. If the substitute teachers meet the anxiety in a low-key approach, the students may feel that the substitutes are trying to become a "pal" to the class. The second approach is often viewed by the students as a sign of weakness in the substitute teacher and may result in greater discipline problems.

#### Conclusion

Administrators, regular teaching staff, and students need to change their approach and attitudes toward the substitute teacher. They need to see the substitute teacher as a resource person with a positive role. The substitute teacher does bring a break in the routine, and can often bring a fresh outlook to the classroom. The assistant principal must sell the substitute teacher program to the other building administrators, the regular teaching staff, and the student body. This is a valuable opportunity to develop a unique learning experience in the teaching of the children.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

The middle school assistant principal must be supportive of the teacher, the beginning teacher, the teacher aide, and the substitute teacher. Continuous support of the teaching staff regarding the values and special considerations of students is essential. When the staff members are aware that the administration shares their concerns in the classroom, then their motivation and efforts are enhanced toward their personal goals of teaching the children.

If the assistant principal is to provide leadership in improving instruction, then he must understand how the teacher, the beginning teacher, the teacher aide, and the substitute teacher perceive their roles in education. These staff members should view their job as more than teaching an academic subject. They should view their respective job as also including the development of the "whole" student. It is the task of the administrator to aid the staff in the improvement of instruction.

The improvement of teaching and learning is a foremost function of the middle school assistant principal. An important factor in determining the success or failure of a middle school is the ability of the assistant principal to lead the staff in the improvement of the school's curricular programs. Working with individuals and groups of teachers to improve staff relations is a demanding task for this

administrator. Helping the teaching staff develop a better understanding of the nature of children and their purpose in education is necessary for effective learning to occur in the middle school today.

### Conclusions

The middle school assistant principal can help the teacher, the beginning teacher, the teacher aide, and the substitute teacher be more effective by actively working to minimize job-related barriers which interfere with the time and efforts needed for teaching students. The administrator must solicit ideas from the teaching staff about the major interferences during the school day. By working with the staff in this manner, the job-related barriers could be reduced. The results could be: increased credibility as viewed by the staff member of the administrator; improved staff morale; and improved quality of instruction. The teaching staff would prefer to do what they are paid to do--teach the children!

The administrator must try several ways to improve morale. The low morale of the teaching staff is related to the behavior of the building administration. The administrator's expectations of the staff and student body has an effect on the performance of the teachers and the behavior of the students. The self-concept of the staff and student body is continually being reinforced both positively and negatively depending on the behavior of the assistant principal and the other building administrators. The middle school assistant principal serves as a role model for the entire teaching staff and the entire student body. This administrator has great impact on the other people in the middle school setting and the effect of his actions are impressed on the other people.

Teachers and students should be partners in the learning experience. The assistant principal can help the teaching staff to see students as friends rather than adversaries. One way is to set a positive example of friendliness in the daily interactions with the staff. Secondly, the assistant principal should consistently treat teachers with respect and understanding, listen to staff concerns, and go out of his way to help them solve problems.

Students that feel good about themselves and their school will have a feeling of success. It is necessary to provide opportunities in the middle school for the students to find individual success. One way to accomplish this goal is to establish special classes for students who are extremely talented in different subject areas. At Johns Hill Middle School there is a program for students who are talented in language arts, math, and science. Appropriate learning opportunities should also be provided for students who are educationally handicapped in some manner and for those students who will profit from remediation. This can be done through the use of resource teachers, teacher aides, and the regular classroom teachers.

Carefully defining responsibility for discipline can contribute to improved student respect for the school staff. Develop disciplinary policies stipulating that all staff members first try to solve problems they encounter with students rather than pass the problems on to others. Teaching staff can be encouraged to work directly with students and then with students' families, in efforts to solve classroom discipline problems before they are brought to the attention of the administration.

Positive communication in the middle school is important. It is essential to organize a reporting system to parents and students which compliments achievement as well as reports failure and unsatisfactory

behavior. It is vital to have staff send both positive and negative reports home to parents. The staff members should be encouraged to have students carry home work for their parents to review. Frequent letters and memos should be written to parents and students which compliment student achievement.

It is important that the new class that enters each fall begins to come to Johns Hill Middle School with a positive image of the school program. The students will pick up perceptions from older brothers and sisters, parents, and other middle school students. Students that enter Johns Hill Middle School anticipate a positive school experience. This is a goal of Johns Hill Middle School and of the assistant principal.



### Recommendations

If the middle school assistant principal is to become more effective in the years ahead, then additional help is needed to perform the administrative tasks assigned to the assistant principal. Assessment of the present staff in terms of skills which could be utilized in order to increase efficiency and accountability within a middle school building is needed. Many tasks could be accomplished by lead teachers or department representatives with very little additional expense to the school district. These tasks include: textbook inventory, locker inventory, routine curriculum coordination, and increased department leadership.

The role of the assistant principal has an increasing emphasis on management. In order to manage more effectively the resources of the middle school, the assistant principal needs help. Support personnel could be identified within existing staff and reimbursed for assisting with management tasks. Accountability and efficiency would be increased. The staff morale would probably improve. The instruction of the children would also be enhanced.

The assistant principal must realize that his position carries with it marginal control. He does not have the power that would enable him to do the job presently demanded by the central administration, the board of education, and the general public. Limitations and restrictions are placed on this building administrator by the external forces mentioned. He must have more involvement over the management of the staff, the students, the educational programs, and the finances of their middle school building in order to become more effective.

In the Decatur Public Schools, in which Johns Hill Middle School is a part, the building administrators have little to say about the

design of the instructional programs. Decisions are made by task force committees, active parent groups, and the board of education sub-committees. They are presented to the board of education and implemented in the individual school buildings. It is in the stage of implementation that the assistant principal is actively involved. Curriculum specialists come to the middle school with the approved programs for implementation. The building administrators, mainly the assistant principal, must bear the responsibility for the new curriculum.

In order for effective instruction to take place, there must be willing learners and classrooms free from disruptions. Disruptive behavior of students is a top priority concern of the teaching staff. While a majority of classroom disruptions are caused by a small percentage of students, it is still extremely difficult to control this problem. The assistant principal is faced with three issues that restrict his power to control the disruptive behavior of students.

First, compulsory attendance laws force disruptive students to stay in school and continually test other students, the staff, and the rules of the middle school. Alternative programs are necessary outside the regular school building to serve these students. Second, student rights are of central focus warning staff and administration to act carefully and prudently in disciplining the disruptive students. Workshops are necessary on the concerns of students rights and school law with respect to teacher rights and school law. The teaching staff needs to have a better understanding of where potential liabilities exist in the middle school. Third, the teaching staff are unsure of their rights and responsibilities of discipline procedures in their classrooms. Again, workshops on the topics of teacher rights are

needed. Open communication between teacher and administrator help to answer questions of liability in the classroom. If the administrator does not have the answer to a school law question, he has a legal resource to consult for an answer or opinion.

The budget is another concern of the building administrator and the assistant principal. The assistant principal along with the principal need to have latitude to determine how educational dollars are spent within their building. The assistant principal is especially interested in the dollars allocated for curriculum materials. The building administrators best know the strengths and weaknesses of the staff, the programs, and the student population. They are in the best position to determine priorities for expenditures for the middle school.

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APPENDIX

LOG OF ACTIVITIES

## LOG OF ACTIVITIES

The Log of Activities includes the general activities of this assistant principal compiled during the first semester of the 1981-1982 school term. The record is categorized according to the following: Activities of the Assistant Principal; Activities Directed to the Experienced Teacher; Activities Directed to the Beginning Teacher; Activities Directed to the Teacher Aide; and Activities Directed to the Substitute Teacher.

## Activities of the Assistant Principal

## August

- 12 Inventory of curriculum materials
- 17 School calender for 1981-1982
- 18 Plan new student orientation
- 19 Weekly administrative meetings begin
- 20 Preparation for opening of school
- 21 New student orientation
- 24 New teacher orientation
- 25 Substitute teacher orientation
- 26 Student registration  
Textbook fee collections  
Staff meetings
- 27 Classes begin  
Textbook fee collections

## September

- 1 Staff meeting
- 3 Departmental cabinet meeting
- 5 Class size reports
- 8 Plan magazine campaign with PTA officers
- 10 Departmental cabinet meeting
- 11 Assembly for magazine program
- 14 In-service program for new teachers and aides
- 15 Student pictures
- 16 In-service program for new teachers and aides
- 17 In-service program for new teachers and aides
- 21 In-service program for new teachers and aides
- 22 Department meetings
- 24 In-service program for new teachers and aides
- 28 Begin pre-evaluation conferences for Science Department
- 29 PTA Open House

## October

- 5 Begin classroom visitations for Science Department  
Post conferences for Science Department
- 8 Staff meeting
- 13 Begin pre-evaluation conferences for Social Studies Department
- 19 Begin classroom visitations for Social Studies Department
- 20 Acting principal for the next three weeks
- 22 Departmental cabinet meeting
- 26 Meeting with teacher aides
- 28 Curriculum meeting



## November

- 2 Staff meeting
- 4 Meeting with beginning teachers
- 5 Departmental cabinet meeting
- 9 Begin pre-evaluation conferences with Science Department
- 12 Truancy Alternative Program
- 16 Begin National Education Week  
Begin classroom visitations for Science Department
- 23 Begin pre-evaluation conferences for Social Studies Department
- 25 Meeting with teacher aides
- 30 Begin classroom visitations for Social Studies Department

## December

- 7 Staff meeting
- 10 Departmental cabinet meeting
- 22 Christmas programs  
Christmas dance

## January

- 4 Staff meeting
- 7 Departmental cabinet meeting
- 8 Meeting of beginning teachers
- 15 End of first semester

## Activities Directed to the Beginning Teacher

## August

24 New teacher orientation  
25 New teacher orientation  
26 Staff meeting  
27 Department meetings

## September

1 Staff meeting  
3 Departmental cabinet meeting  
8 Staff meeting  
14 In-service program--Assertive Discipline  
16 In-service program--Assertive Discipline  
17 In-service program--Assertive Discipline  
21 In-service program--Assertive Discipline  
22 Department meetings  
24 In-service program--Assertive Discipline

## October

8 Staff meeting  
22 Departmental cabinet meeting

## November

2 Staff meeting  
4 Meeting with beginning teachers  
5 Departmental cabinet meeting

## December

7 Staff meeting  
10 Departmental cabinet meeting

## January

4 Staff meeting  
7 Departmental cabinet meeting  
8 Meeting of beginning teachers  
14 Department meetings  
15 Teacher workshop day

## Activities Directed to the Teacher Aide

## August

26 Orientation for teacher aides

## September

14 In-service program--Assertive Discipline

16 In-service program--Assertive Discipline

17 In-service program--Assertive Discipline

21 In-service program--Assertive Discipline

24 In-service program--Assertive Discipline

## October

8 Staff meeting

## November

2 Staff meeting

25 Meeting with teacher aides

## December

7 Staff meeting

## January

4 Staff meeting

## Activities Directed to the Substitute Teacher

## August

21 Orientation for all substitute teachers of District #61

## September

3 Four substitutes in building  
 4 One substitute in building  
 10 One substitute in building  
 11 One substitute in building  
 14 One substitute in building  
 16 Two substitutes in building  
 17 Two substitutes in building  
 18 Three substitutes in building  
 21 One substitute in building  
 23 Two substitutes in building  
 28 Two substitutes in building  
 29 One substitute in building  
 30 One substitute in building

## October

6 One substitute in building  
 7 Two substitutes in building  
 8 One substitute in building  
 13 One substitute in building  
 14 One substitute in building  
 15 One substitute in building  
 16 Three substitutes in building  
 19 One substitute in building  
 23 Three substitutes in building  
 28 Four substitutes in building  
 29 Two substitutes in building  
 30 Three substitutes in building

## November

2 One substitute in building  
 3 Three substitutes in building  
 4 One substitute in building  
 5 Two substitutes in building  
 6 Two substitutes in building  
 9 Two substitutes in building  
 10 One substitute in building  
 12 One substitute in building  
 13 One substitute in building

16 One substitute in building  
19 Two substitutes in building  
20 One substitute in building  
23 Four substitutes in building

## December

4 One substitute in building  
9 Two substitutes in building  
10 Two substitutes in building  
11 One substitute in building  
15 One substitute in building  
16 Two substitutes in building  
18 Two substitutes in building  
21 One substitute in building

## January

4 One substitute in building  
5 Two substitutes in building  
6 One substitute in building  
13 One substitute in building