1977

An Internal Public Relations Plan for Neoga Community Unit #3's Title 1 Project

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AN INTERNAL PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN For

NEOGA COMMUNITY UNIT #3's TITLE 1 PROJECT

(TITLE)

BY

Marilyn Gilmer Rennels

B.S. in Ed., Eastern Illinois University, 1951
M.S. in Ed., Eastern Illinois University, 1971

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

1977
YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

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Acknowledgement

Without the approval and cooperation of Jerry Overby, Superintendent of the Neoga Schools, Robert Schwindt, principals of Neoga Elementary and Junior High School, and Lyle Marshall, principal of Pioneer School, my study would have been impossible. Just as important was the co-operation, help and encouragement of the classroom teachers employed by the Neoga Community Unit #3 during the school year of 1976 - 1977.

I would sincerely like to thank Dr. Robert Shuff who helped me formalize my plan and implement it at the beginning of the school year. Dr. Walter Garland has been a great help in the final stages of my study. Without his assistance, I might have been unable to complete my field experience study at this time.

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CHAPTER 1

General Background Of The Title 1 Legislation And Need For Improved Internal Public Relations In Neoga Schools

This Field Experience Study is an attempt to maximize the benefits of Neoga's Title 1 project for the educationally disadvantaged student in Neoga Community Unit #3. Neoga's FY 1976 Title 1 evaluation procedure had shown that classroom teachers did not feel that the Title 1 program and the developmental reading programs were interlocking components of the same reading program. It seemed essential that the Title 1 teacher's efforts be reinforcing if the child was to overcome his reading deficiencies. By improving the internal public relations a major step has been taken toward this goal.

The Origination Of Title 1 was brought about by the Elementary and Secondary Educational Act of 1965. Title 1 was designed to make an inroad into the ever-enlarging percentage of educationally disadvantaged students.[1] ESEA Title 1 took a large portion of taxpayers' money and promised to show results. The initial inception of the program was hastily thrown together, and many mistakes were made. Great improvements in Title 1 projects have

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[1] U.S., Revision of Regulations. "Financial Assistance To Local Educational Agencies To Meet The Special Educational Needs Of Educationally Deprived, Neglected and Delinquent Children", Federal Register, Vol. 41, Tuesday, Sept. 28, 1976.

been made, but in spite of this, illiteracy is not unknown in our country. The 1977 Britannica Book of the Year in a report on education shows the United States as sixteenth in the percentage of literacy. This figure was arrived at by examining the general population over the age of fourteen.

Failure Of Title 1 has been loudly proclaimed by many lawmakers and as vocally denied by its advocates. The Title 1 programs in large part have not accomplished the tasks they set out to do. In a yet unpublished report on 1976 Title 1 programs a major complaint was the isolation of Title 1 programs from the classroom developmental program. According to Sister Rosemary Winklejohann, member of the federal reporting committee, the failure of many Title 1 programs is largely due to the lack of communication between regular classroom and Title 1 personnel.[2]

Title 1 Failure Is A Serious Economic Problem that must not be overlooked. The serious aspect of the failures of expensive Title 1 projects is pointed up in George Weber's "Functional Illiteracy In The United States".[3] The implications of functional illiteracy are far-reaching in the economic, social, and political areas. In a complex society the need for unskilled illiterate workers drops to an extreme low. A worker who cannot read may become a dangerous liability.

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[2]Sister Rosemary Winklejohann, Director of Member Services, National Council of Teachers of English, Champaign, Ill. was a speaker at East Central-EIU Reading Council Meeting, February 24, 1977, Eastern Illinois University, Charleston.

[3]George Weber, "Functional Illiteracy in the United States", 1977 Britannica Book of the Year, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., pp 301-326.

The Public And Even Teachers Misunderstand Title 1 Purpose

as evidenced by many comments made about the program. Even though a great deal of thought and effort went into the area of internal public relations in Neoga's FY 1976 Title 1 program, there was a shocking lack of understanding among the regular classroom teachers. During the procedure of gathering information for the annual evaluation several items indicated that a few teachers were ignorant on the most basic facts about Neoga's Title 1 program. In spite of all Title 1 personnel being heavily scheduled with a higher than desirable caseload, the comment was advanced that the program should not waste time with bookwork, etc., but get to work with the students who needed help.[4] This indicated that the teacher who responded in this manner had little knowledge of the real facts of the Title 1 program. The shocking thing was that Title 1 reports had been given at monthly building meetings and semi-quarterly written reports had been sent to all teachers. If teachers who were intimately connected with the Title 1 program by having several youngsters from their class in Title 1 classes had felt extremely familiar with the details of Neoga's Title 1 project the problem would have been simply lack of interest. The facts did not bear this out. A classroom teacher, who had six students in the Title 1 program, indicated little knowledge of goals, procedures, or results of the Title 1 project. It was evident that what we had done to foster awareness of Neoga's Title 1 project had not accomplished the desired results.

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[4]Neoga's Title 1 Program Evaluation, Teacher Survey Sheets, May, 1976.

Title 1 Gain To Alleviate Educational Deficiency May Be Tied To Cooperation Of Developmental And Supplementary Programs and is vitally important to the students involved. When all pre-test and post-test scores had been tabulated the overall results of gain were good. But there were the few youngsters who did not make any gain but were farther behind at the end of the year. In the process of carefully going over the year's work plan for these students the remedial work in the Title 1 program seemed well founded and effective, but it was noticed that the regular developmental reading program and the Title 1 reading program were not closely synchronized throughout the year. Jane Petrek[5] made a statement that the most effective reading remediation in the early elementary grades had to be carefully co-ordinated with the developmental reading. Sister Winklejohann went even farther and stated that all language arts areas must be integrated if optimal growth is to occur.[6] Looking at the post-test results made me wonder if we could increase the student's growth rate by concentrating on closer co-operation between the regular developmental reading program and the supplementary Title 1 program. The obvious way to do this seemed to be by improving communication and thus public relations between Title 1 teacher and the classroom teachers. The records of the students who did not make the expected gain were carefully examined to try to pinpoint the actual reason for the lack or growth. in most cases emotional problems, or physical problems were known

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[5]Jane Petrek, reading specialist from Schaumberg, was a speaker at the Illinois Reading Council, March 11, 1977, Eastern Illinois University. "Organizing A Remedial Reading Program At the Elementary Level"

[6]Winkeljohann. Op Cit

to be contributing to the educational problem. We must keep in mind that the student had nine months of developmental reading and at least eight months with the Title 1 supplementary reading program.

Title 1 Funding May Be In Jeopardy if good consistent results are not shown. If we accept the fact that Title 1 exists only to overcome the educational disadvantage of the eligible students, then a lack of educational growth becomes not only a personal tragedy for the student, but also a threat to continuation of Title 1 funding. Jane Petrek stated that one of the most serious drawbacks of Title 1 programs is the setting of unrealistic goals.[7] The progress expected must be realistic for the capabilities of the children in the program. For an educational deficiency to be overcome there must be good consistent growth in the specific academic areas. Slight or even almost normal growth will compound the retardation since the student started out already behind at least one year. Richard C. Anderson pointed out that a prevalent false assumption is that the child brings to school fairly adequate oral language.[8] Simply add decoding skills and you obtain an adequate reader! One of the biggest jobs for all involved in the Title 1 student's academic plan is the continuation and expansion of oral language expression and comprehension. The child can not be segmented by different approaches and objectives and make optimal gains. One of the most

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[7]Petrek. Op Cit

[8]Richard C. Anderson, NIE Project Director, Center For The Study Of Reading, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois. He was a speaker at Illinois Reading Council, Eastern Illinois University, March 11, 1977.

important goals for the Title 1 student must be the reward of success. One successful reading experience leads to another!

CHAPTER 2

A Need And A Plan To Improve The Internal Public Relations In Neoga's Title 1 Project

A Weak Area In Neoga's Title 1 Project was visible in the evaluation of the program. Introspection of Neoga's 1976 Title 1 evaluation results indicated that not all students had made the maximum gains we could expect from that student. The area where we felt we were weakest was the correlation of objectives in the developmental reading and the supplemental (Tilte 1) reading programs. We were convinced that the greater the correlation of the programsthe more successful we could be in elimination of a child's educational deficiency. The greatest gains in the 1976 program were shown by students of classroom teachers who had a very positive attitude toward the Title 1 program. Thus we felt that the students reflected the positive attitude of their teacher and that this resulted in the excellent gains from this group. The logical way to improve teacher attitudes and provide an increased awareness of the Title 1 program was through a concentrated effort to improve the internal public relations in our school unit. The increased understanding, acceptance and interplay between Title 1 personnel and the regular staff would directly benefit the Title 1 student.

Brief, More Frequent Conferences With Classroom Teachers were seen as one way to improve communications. Written communication and formal reports at staff meetings did not seem to have

accomplished the desired results, so it was determined that there should be increased personal contact. Early in the school year the most important personal contact occurred.

Selecting And Scheduling Title 1 Youngsters is a critical area of the Title 1 program. The task of selecting and scheduling was a joint co-operative effort on the part of the Title 1 teacher and the classroom teacher. Initial Title 1 screening revealed the youngsters who were eligible for the program. The eligible youngster was then tested to see his reading achievement level. The Title 1 teacher took the reading achievement score and a tentative reading expectancy score for each eligible youngster and met with the student's classroom teacher. The student's attitude, his reading expectancy score, and his reading achievement were carefully evaluated. The greater the difference between the two scores the higher priority the student had for the Title 1 program. A maximum of six students could be taken from any classroom because of available space and time. The classroom teacher was considered the final authority to know which youngsters were the most in need of individual or small group instruction. Dr. Billy Belle Weber, the Title 1 Director of the St. Louis schools, believes that selection of students for the Title 1 program should be by drawing a number of students at random.[9] I disagree. In a small program like ours--it must be more personal! After the selection of the students the teacher was given a sheet indicating the time that Title 1 personnel would be available in his building four

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[9]Dr. Billy Belle Weber, speaker at Title 1 meeting at the Sheraton Inn, Chicago, May, 1976.

days a week and asked to choose the best time for the students from his room to be away from the regular classroom. Careful instructions were given to be sure that no child was scheduled during his developmental reading time, art, physical education, music or recess time. The teacher was asked to consider the child's favorite academic areas and avoid having him miss this class. When all the teachers' preferences were handed in the Title 1 teacher met with anyone who had indicated the same time slot as another teacher, and a compromise was reached with all involved teachers participating in the final choices. The selection and scheduling of students is of utmost importance to a successful Title 1 program. The task is indeed a difficult one with many compromises, trials, and changes before it is resolved in a satisfactory manner. It is not possible to have the best time for every student. There are too many schedules to synchronize to make this a reality. But if excellent internal public relations have been established the co-operation of all involved will do much to make the entire year's program a success, and the student's growth rewarding.

Program Development For Title 1 Student is the biggest task of the year. After the selection and scheduling of students the program development for each student must occur. This year with a definite goal of better communication and correlation not only the student's strengths and weaknesses but also his developmental reading level, basic skills, and vocabulary were considered. For example, cards for word recall games or visual memory games were made with the vocabulary words the student was being introduced

to in his developmental reading. In many cases the classroom teacher would indicate areas where the student was having trouble in his developmental reading, and plans were developed to meet this need.

A Plan For Better Teacher Interaction had to be conceived before the school year started. In past years the scheduled conferences after school or during a teacher's planning period had brought about personal contact, but sometimes had caused inconvenience or resentment on the classroom teachers part. This year a definite plan to avoid this was approved. Brief, informal exchanges occurring frequently when picking up children or returning them to the classroom, a minute or two early in the morning, or a discrete conversation at the lunch table replaced the regularly scheduled conferences. Twice a year a substitute teacher replaced the teacher in the regular classroom, for a period, to free her to visit Title 1 class with her students once, and once to discuss students and their progress with the Title 1 teacher. It was planned to relay weekly plans to classroom teachers, but this was phased out as it worked better for us to follow the teacher's plans.

Title 1 Written Communications are necessary for a complete program. Even though written communications were unsatisfactory in themselves, it was considered important to retain written quarterlynewsletter sent to all administrators, parent advisory council members, and faculty in our school unit.[10]

Title 1 Parent-Teacher Conferences and contact are considered essential in any Title 1 program or for that matter any federally-

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[10]See Appendix, page 1, 2, and 3.

funded program. It had been more or less mandatory in our school unit for "special service" teachers to have as many parent-teacher conferences as possible. Every effort this year has been to have the classroom teacher present for the conference, too. The best way has been for the classroom teacher to issue the invitation to the parent. This not only fosters a co-operative attitude, but also demonstrates to the parents the combined interest and concern of the teachers. Far from being overwhelmed by two teachers, the parents involved have indicated their appreciation for the meetings.

Inservice For Classroom Teachers is written into the Title 1 program to help them cope with the educationally disadvantaged student in their room. Any teacher who has Title 1 students in his or her classroom has been encouraged to attend reading conferences, and workshops at Title 1 expense. It was felt that this was the best possible inservice to benefit the student. In our area two good reading conferences were held at Eastern Illinois University this year. The fall reading conference occurred the same day as our main money-making project for the P.T.A. This meant we had no teachers who could attend the November 5 conference. The March 11-12 State Reading Council was attended by a representative of every two grade levels, and a written report was circulated to bring back ideas from the conference. The Title 1 Parent Advisory Council sponsored a meeting on child behavior problems. Teachers were invited and at least three did attend.

An Evaluation Prccedure to determine if internal public relations have been improved in the Neoga Schools was necessary. The evaluation procedure used to determine if there has been an improvement in the internal public relations in Neoga's Title 1 project was a personal interview with the teachers concerned. During the

interview questions were designed to determine a positive or negative attitude toward the Title 1 project. Another group of questions were designed to determine the teacher's familiarity with the Title 1 program. The last group of questions were designed to see if the Title 1 program is achieving its goals.[11]

Assumptions And Limitations were built into the study by its very nature. It is assumed that all teachers involved are mainly concerned with the student and are interested in helping him acquire the highest possible degree of achievement. This study will be limited to the first four grades, where there is actual day-to-day contact with students and teachers.

Definitions of terms that could be misinterpreted:

ESEA- refers to the Elementary and Secondary Educational Act of 1965.

Title 1- a section of ESEA that provides financial assistance to local educational agencies for programs to meet the special educational needs of educationally deprived children in low-income areas.

Educationally-Deprived or educationally-disadvantaged refers to children who are achieving one or more years behind the achievement expected at the appropriate grade level for such students.

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[11]See Appendix, page 4.

CHAPTER 3

The Design Of The Field Experience Study To Improve Internal Public Relations In Neoga's Title I Program

The Beginning Of The Plan To Improve Public Relations In Neoga's Title I Project was early in the summer of 1976. This field experience study extended over the school year of 1976-1977. Therefore it was written into the official Title I program in the summer of 1976. The plan was considered and approved by Neoga's superintendent of schools, Jerry Overby, and the two principals involved, Robert Schwindt and Lyle Marshall, prior to the opening of the 1976-1977 school year.

The Title I Program Was Explained To Classroom Teachers by Marilyn Rennels, the Title I director, during the initial inservice teacher workshop in our school unit. A brief overview including funding, eligible students, scheduling, reporting, parent contact and teacher contact was accompanied by a written teacher referral sheet that was given to each teacher.[12] At this time the need for better internal public relations was expressed by both the regular classroom teachers and the Title I staff, and classroom teacher co-operation and suggestions encouraged.

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[12] See Appendix, page 5

The Actual Plan For Improving Internal Public Relations Involve Classroom Teachers Participation In Five Areas if the plan is going to work. Instead of the Title 1 program operating outside of the regular classroom as a complete separate supplementary, remedial reading program, the classroom teacher was more intimately involved. The close co-operation of the classroom teacher was necessary in the selection and scheduling of students. Integration of the developmental and supplementary programs was accomplished in the program development for each student. Areas of skill weakness were correlated with reinforcing skills being taught and vocabulary being introduced in the classroom. A copy of the student's Title 1 quarterly report was sent to his classroom teacher. In many instances a conference was held with the classroom teacher before the Title 1 report was prepared. This was done because there may be a great difference in a student in a large group or small group environment. The fifth, and perhaps the most important, way to increase understanding and improve internal public relations was to have the classroom teacher attend a Title 1 session with the students from his room. This was accomplished by hiring a substitute teacher to take over in the classroom for the Title 1 period. The schedule remained the same as a regular day for the Title 1 teachers.

The Data To Prove Or Disprove The Improvement Of Internal Public Relations was gathered by personal interview. An informational letter went out to each teacher after a previous oral announcement of the plan was made to the teachers involved.[13]

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[13]See Appendix, page 6.

Arrangements were made to have a substitute go into the regular classroom to enable the teacher to meet with Mrs. Rennels for a half-an-hour period. This was done to prevent inconvenience to the regular teachers. They had the privilege of choosing the most convenient time for them. The teachers were given the questions they would be asked in the interview in the letter several days in advance of the interview. If the teacher had no objection, a tape recording of the interview was made and then later transferred to a written document. Of the twelve teachers closely involved in the Title 1 program, nine gladly consented to the recording. The remaining three teachers felt uncomfortable with recording and their responses were written by Mrs. Rennels during the interview.

The Questions Used In The Interview to evaluate this study were divided into three definite categories. The first three questions in the interview were general questions aimed at determining the greatest need in the classroom for supplementary aid. These questions were to be used in the needs assessment for next year's program and were not related to this study. The next three questions were designed to determine a positive or negative attitude of the classroom teacher toward the Title 1 program. These questions were as follows:

1. Have you felt free to discuss Title 1 students work and work habits with the Title 1 teacher?

2. Did you feel that the student was benefitting from the Title 1 classes enough to justify the "lost" time in the room?

3. Do you feel that the Title 1 classes are helping you in your relationship with the Title 1 student?

The next two questions (with more than one part) were designed to establish the classroom teacher's familiarity with the Title 1 program. These questions were as follows:

4. Have you felt the Title 1 teacher was working with you in trying to help the Title 1 student? Did you feel your individual efforts were reinforced by the Title 1 program or did you sometimes feel you were pulling the child in different directions?

5. Did you feel you knew what was going on in the Title 1 sessions? Or did you think it was "fun and games?"

The last two questions were really the most important and the most difficult to answer. It was important to point out the money was available for three full-time teachers and one full-time aide. It was also considered essential to point out that only a specified amount can be used for supplies, materials, and textbooks. These two questions were as follows:

6. Do you feel the needs of the Title 1 student are being met in the Title 1 program in proportionate amount to the money available?

7. Do you feel that your collective efforts (regular classroom and Title 1) have resulted in a total or partial easement of the Title 1 student's educational deficiency?

The conversations and exchange about the questions were quite lengthyand very informative. In spite of this fact the direct answers to the questions were simply stated and had a tendency to naturally divide into two types. Many responses were identical and several teachers mentioned that they had discussed the questions prior to the interview. No attempt to prevent this was undertaken. In fact, it was considered a positive move. Each teacher was also aware that a field experience study was taking place during the year. They were aware that their responses were to be used, and were anxious to be as helpful as possible.

CHAPTER 4

The Findings Of The Evaluative Interviews To Determine If There Has Been A Positive Outcome To The Internal Public Relations Of Neoga's Title 1 Program

The First Interview Question, "Have you felt free to discuss Title 1 student's work and work habits with the Title 1 teacher?" demonstrated clearly that this area of public relations was improved from last year. All twelve teachers answered "yes" to this question. Comments in this category were very positive although two teachers did indicate that they felt they didn't have the time or any reason to discuss the Title 1 student's work. In the discussion that followed the actual interview two teachers mentioned the fact that they could always leave a note regarding a student in the Title 1 teacher's mailbox or a request to talk to her; and they can be sure it will be answered quickly. Two teachers also mentioned that when Title 1 personnel picked up or returned students to the classroom door was an excellent time to exchange a note or ask for a conference time.

The Response To The Second Question, "Did you feel that the student was benefitting from the Title 1 classes enough to justify the "lost" time in the classroom?" was critical to this study. Because of the careful involvement of the classroom teacher in the scheduling process, it was anticipated that most answers to this

question would be in the affirmative. But with a very limited staff and an actual timetable of only five and one-half hours when students are available, suitable scheduling is a difficult problem. Except for one teacher who responded in a very negative manner, all of the teachers felt that the best possible job in scheduling had been accomplished. They had worked with the Title 1 staff in the scheduling and realized that it was not possible to eliminate all problems in this area and still keep the maximum number of children in the program. Four teachers suggested that Title 1 youngsters seemed to gain so much more from a small group or individual experience than from a large group experience that they would be glad to have them attend Title 1 class at any appropriate time. Two teachers suggested changing the schedule at least once during the year so that the student would not be out of the regular classroom the same time all year.

The Third Question, "Do you feel that the Title 1 classes are helping you in your relationship with the Title 1 student?" was a difficult one to answer. It was directed toward one of the age-old problems in any remedial program. Just how much is the progress in remedial work reflected in the regular classroom? This question was one that the teachers considered carefully before answering. Eight of the classroom teachers felt that the students' successful work in the Title 1 sessions was reflected by improved work and work habits in the regular classroom. Four of the teachers felt there had been no problem in their relationship with the student. Thus they indicated no noticeable change because of the Title 1 program.

There Are Two Parts To The Fourth Question, "Have you felt that the Title 1 teacher was working with you in trying to help the Title 1 students? Did you feel your individual efforts were reinforced by the Title 1 program or did you sometimes feel you were pulling the child in opposite directions?" but many teachers felt one answer covered the entire question. This question was particularly important to discover the amount of correlation and co-operation between the developmental reading program and the supplementary reading program. A unanimous response was that the Title 1 teacher and the classroom teacher were working together to aid the student. Not one response indicated any division in concentrated efforts to improve the child's reading skills. This is a very important measure of the internal public relations working for the ultimate growth of the Title 1 students.

The Fifth Question, "Did you feel you knew what was going on in the Title 1 sessions? Or did you think it was just "fun and games"." brought much favorable comment on the teacher visitation of the Title 1 sessions. Many of the interviewees voiced the opinion that visiting the Title 1 class was a "necessity" to really understand the program. Two of the teachers remarked about how surprised they were because the children worked so hard during the Title 1 session. Because the children enjoyed Title 1 class so much they had been dubious of the value of the Title 1 sessions before the visitation. All twelve interviewees definitely felt they had a general idea of what youngsters were doing in the Title 1 program, and they felt familiar with the program's objectives.

The Sixth Question, "Do you feel the needs of the Title 1 students are being met in the Title 1 program in proportionate amount to the money available?" elicited a good discussion of federal funding and alternative local spending. A unanimous approval of the emphasis on reaching youngsters in academic trouble as soon as possible was voiced. Three teachers declared a wish that more money was available so that the program could be expanded.

The Seventh And Last Question, "Do you feel that your collective efforts (regular classroom and Title 1) have resulted in a total or partial easement of the Title 1 student's educational deficiency?" was a difficult thing to assess. All of the twelve teachers were favorable in their comments but reservations as to the amount of easement was expressed. One teacher mentioned that the students' needs were being met well this year and very good growth had taken place, but she worries about what would happen to them if supplemental help was not available next year. The concensus of opinion showed some students have had total easement, the great majority of students have shown partial easement, and a few students have shown almost no progress despite the tremendous effort of both the classroom teacher and the Title 1 teacher. The opinion was expressed that without effort on the part of the student any program was sure to fail!

The Completed Interviews Brought A Feeling Of Accomplishment because there was a comradeship in the interviews that expressed more clearly than words the co-ordinated aims of the developmental and the supplementary reading programs. The teachers in this study are familiar with the Title 1 format and feel that a consistent dialogue has occurred throughout the year.

CHAPTER 5

Summary of Conclusions Reached By This Field Experience Study and Recommendations for Improving the Internal Public Relations of Neoga's Title 1 Project

Internal Public Relations Between Title 1 Staff and the Regular Staff Is Vitally Important if the Title 1 student is to make maximum growth in his reading skills. It is felt that it is difficult for any "special" program to develop the understanding and communication necessary to make the program produce the maximum growth. Realizing that some classroom teachers felt totally unfamiliar with the Title 1 program was the first step in trying to overcome the lack of communication. Cooperation and understanding are probably the most lacking but necessary elements of a supplementary compensatory program.

A Definite Plan To Improve Internal Public Relations was worked out with a deliberate scheme to actively involve the classroom teachers in as many areas as possible. The increased personal contact and responsibility began with the scheduling of students. The classroom teacher was very much evident in the program development for the Title 1 students from his or her classroom. An increased cooperation for parent-teacher conferences was attempted by the Title 1 teacher being more in the background, but always available for a parent conference. Joint classroom teacher-Title 1 teacher and parent conferences have become more routine. The student's quarterly reports and a Title 1 Quarterly newsletter were sent to

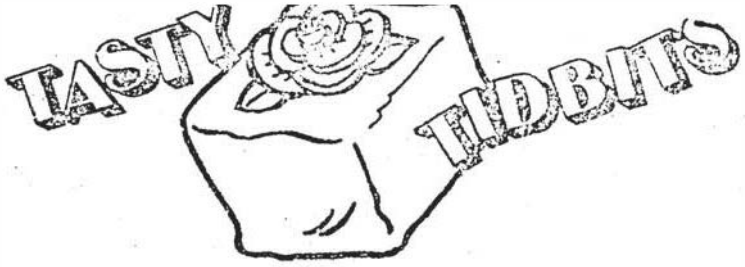
the classroom teachers. The most valuable experience in improving cooperation and understanding was the opportunity for classroom teachers to visit a Title 1 session with the students from their class.

Interview Questions Used to Evaluate the success or failure or the field experience study seemed to be good conversation starters. The idea of using a substitute teacher to free the classroom teacher for an interview was appreciated by all twelve teachers most directly concerned. Nine of the teachers felt that frequent personal contact had been sufficient and would like to see it continued at the same level next year. Three teachers felt that personal contact had been adequate, but indicated they would appreciate a twice-monthly or monthly written report on what skills students are working on, what they are accomplishing, and any other pertinent information that seems important. All of the classroom teachers felt that visiting the Title 1 session with their student was an essential requisite to understanding and cooperating with the Title 1 program. All-in-all the interview findings proved that the classroom teachers felt very familiar with the Title 1 program and were satisfied that the Title 1 program was correlated closely enough with the developmental reading program to achieve good results with the Title 1 students. A concensus of opinion was that results were such to indicate that almost all youngsters were showing partial easement of their educational deficiency, and a few students had completely overcome their education disadvantage. All agreed that this took time. Public relations seem extremely good-maybe because everyone is aware that there had been a determined effort to improve

them and because we are convinced that good internal relations benefit the student. The student and his ability to succeed is the most important element in any academic program. It is the reason for the Title 1 program and therefore the most critical area in the evaluation of any part of the program.

Recommendations for future Title 1 programs to continue to build on the improvement in the internal public relations will be to continue the plan used this year. In addition to the ideas developed for this, it will be remembered that several teachers would like to have periodical written reviews for the students from their classrooms. We would also like to try to change session times at least once during the year so that youngsters will not be absent from the classroom the same time all year. Most important is keeping in mind the idea that we are all working for the same goal for the student and we are more likely to achieve it if we work together.

APPENDIX



from TITLE I

Winter Quarter Report from Neoga Title I
Marilyn Rennels, Title I Director
Staff: Peggy Gates, Margo Blaudow, Connie Maroon

Neoga Has a Good Representation at Illinois Reading Council

The Illinois Reading Council was held March 11-12, 1977, at EIU, Charleston. Title I sponsored the attendance of a classroom teacher representing every two grade levels in the elementary school. Marian Lindley represented first and second grade. Linda Krabel represented third and fourth grade. Linda Short was the fifth and sixth grade representative. The seventh and eighth grade representative was Pat Andrews. Hopefully they have had some pertinent ideas to share with fellow teachers. The entire elementary and junior high title 1 staff, Peggy Gates, Connie Maroon, and Marilyn Rennels attended Friday as part of the title 1 inservice. Mary Sur, Mary Lou Matthews, and Marilyn Rennels attended Saturday sessions.

Some worthwhile reminders from conference:

Reading skills are important but don't swing too far that way --no reading without comprehension!

Concept and vocabulary building needs to be a continuous spiral pre-school through college.

Children need room and privacy for reading and thinking.

Teacher questioning is vitally important in developing critical reading.

Reading scores could be high but still dipping in areas of critical and creative reading.

Margo Blaudow Replaces Lindsay Marting in High School

Mrs. Blaudow was raised in Arthur, Illinois, and attended Arthur Elementary and High School. She went to McKendree College, Lakeland Junior College, and Monterrey Techologico in Monterrey, Mexico. In June, 1971, she received a Masters degree in Guidance from SIUE. She taught in Lovington, Illinois, for one year then taught fifth grade for three years in Waterloo, Illinois. She also taught on a part-time basis as a title 1 remedial reading teacher in Newton, Illinois.

Margo's family moved to Neoga in June of 1976 and she substituted in the district until accepting the position as title 1 teacher at Neoga High School. Her husband, Jerry Blaudow, also from Arthur, Illinois, is presently working as Insurance Adjuster for Country Companies in Moultrie and Douglas counties. They have one child, Kendra, age 2½. Her interests are tole painting, needlework, swimming, skiing, and teaching C.P.R.

The PAC of Title I meeting orginally planned for March 17 was postponed to March 24 because of the illness of Robert Gentry, husband of PAC president Donna Gentry. We are glad to report that Bob is home from the hospital and making good recovery from his surgery.

Pioneer Teachers Deserve a Special Thanks!

Mrs. Maroon and Mrs. Rennels really appreciate the consideration the classroom teachers have shown since they have been working in the hallway at Pioneer. Not one word of criticism has been heard about the clutter in the hallway or the noise of oral reading or the excited voices in a reading game! We know it is an inconvenience to you and we like it when you make us feel needed and welcome. Thanks again.

Neoga Elementary and Junior High Teachers Have Been Doing a Terrific Job

Who would believe the big problem it is to keep synchronized with seven or more different clocks? If we show up early or late for title 1 youngsters the classroom teachers bear it with a grin. The title 1 staff feels fortunate to be working with such an understanding, cooperative group. Your attitude is reflected in the students' attitude and makes it possible for us to accomplish what we do.

Neoga Community Unit #3
Neoga, Illinois
Third Quarter Report
March, 1977
Title I Reading Improvement
Pioneer--First & Second Grade

_____is working with Mrs. Rennels and Mrs. Marcon on reading skill development.

In second grade we are closely following the classroom reading instruction with different ways of strengthening the same skills. We read silently and orally every day. We work on word attack skills.

In first grade we are working with letter-sound relationship, short-vowel words and reading stories using the short vowel words.

Comment:_____

_____ is working ☐ slowly, with difficulty

☐ slowly, but making progress

☐ well

☐ exceptionally well

M. Rennels, Title I Director

Neoga Community Unit #3
Neoga Elementary and Junior High
Third and Fourth Grades
Title I Third Quarter Report
March, 1977

_____ is working with Mrs. Rennels and Mrs. Marcon in the Title I reading improvement program.

In third grade we have continued our emphasis on understanding what we read. We have been looking for reasons, signal words to indicate sequence, and listing ideas in correct order. We are continuing work on word-attack skills.

In fourth grade we are working with a catch-up program designed to increase reading vocabulary and improve oral reading.

_____ is ☐ not working well, showing little progress

☐ working well, showing some progress

☐ working very well, showing good progress

M. Rennels, Title I Director

Referral Sheet

NEOGA COMMUNITY UNIT #3
TITLE I INDIVIDUALIZED READING INSTRUCTION
Marilyn Rennels, Director
Lindsey Marting, High School
Peggy Gates, Junior High
Connie Maroon, Aide

Teachers: Two main areas should be considered in making a referral. These two factors are: (1) The child should be capable of making progress. Ninety percent of our case load must be youngsters of normal or above intelligence. Ten percent of our case load may be designated slow learners or learning disability. We can not work with EMH. (2) The student must be educationally deprived. In first and second grades this may be determined as a child who begins to fall significantly behind the rest of the class in reading skills. In later grades it is interpreted as a child with reading achievement at least $1\frac{1}{2}$ grade levels below grade placement.

Elementary & Junior High: If you have new students you are concerned about and would like us to do informal testing please get referrals in as soon as possible. We will be glad to test any student for you even those you are not considering for the title 1 program. Please try to refer reading problems as they show up!

Secondary: As soon as you realize that a student in your class is going to make a D or lower in your class, please put down the students's name, the name of the course, any difficulties you are aware of, and your name, and put the referral sheet in Mrs. Marting's mailbox.

Name of student (Use other side if needed)	Consider for reg. program	Special testing	Reason for referral Specific difficulties
1.	☐	☐	
2.	☐	☐	
3.	☐	☐	
4.	☐	☐	
5.	☐	☐	
6.	☐	☐	

Teacher turning in referral _____ Class Grade _____

Date of referral _____

From: Mrs. Rennels, Title I Date out: September 8, 1976

To: 3rd & 4th Grade Teachers Date back: No later than Sept. 9, 1976

Subject: Title I Schedule

Instructions: Below is a tentative schedule. Please look it over and see if you have any better suggestions. There is a list of students we "know about" that you have in your room. We found that best results can be obtained with no more than six students on the bus at any one time. Please add any students you feel need special help. Together we will determine the list of eligibles for your classroom.

Remember that I can not take the students during the regular reading class, from art, music, physical education, or break-time. The schedule does not in any way reflect a feeling that some subjects are less important than others. English and social studies are closely related to title 1 sessions and therefore a good choice for a time slot. Science requires good reading skills and therefore may be a logical choice for catch-up reading sessions. (Thisschedule is hard on L. Krabel.)

Tentative suggestions:

12:05-12:30 4 B

12:30-12:55 3 S

1:00-1:25 3 H

1:30-1:55 4 S

2:00-2:25 4 T

2:30-3:00 3 K

Students with reading problems I know about:

Additional Names:

Comments: _____

_____

_____

Neoga Community Unit #3
Neoga, Illinois
April 1, 1977

Teachers:

The time for evaluation and planning has arrived. I am doing this a week early, because I need the results to finish the field experience study.

In our needs assessment for next year an interview will be held with teachers 1-4, and English and reading teachers in 5-8. In order to make it as convenient as possible for you a substitute will be filling in in your room while you talk with Mrs. Rennels. Since there needs to be a record of established need it would be preferable to have a tape of interviews and then transcribe the answers to a written document. Please indicate the time you would prefer and what lesson the substitute would need to prepare for.

These questions are the ones you will be asked to respond to in the interview. Please look them over.

1. What subject area do you feel youngsters in your class need the most?
2. What subject area do you feel is a "weak" area?
3. What one subject area do you feel is the most important to the child's future success?
4. Have you felt free to discuss Title I student's work and work habits with the Title I teacher?
5. Did you feel that the student was benefitting from the Title I classes enough to justify the "lost" time in the room?
6. Do you feel that the Title I classes are helping you in your relationship to the Title I student?
7. Have you felt that the Title I teacher was working with you in trying to help the Title I student? Did you feel your individual efforts were reinforced by the Title I program or did you sometimes feel you were pulling the child in different directions?
8. Did you feel you knew what was going on in the Title I sessions? Or did you think it was just "fun and games"?
9. Do you feel the needs of the Title I student are being met in the Title I program in proportionate amount to the money available?
10. Do you feel that your collective efforts (regular classroom and Title I) have resulted in a total or partial easement of the Title I student's educational deficiency?

Marilyn Rennels

Circle desired day and time.

- -

Tuesday, April 5, all day NEJHS
Wednesday, April 6, Pioneer 8:00-1:30 NEJHS 1:30-3:00

8:00-8:25
8:30-8:55
9:00-9:25 Tuesday
9:30-9:55 NEJHS
10:00-10:25
10:30-11:00 Wednesday
12:00-12:25 Pioneer
12:30-1:00
1:00-1:25
1:30-1:55
2:00-2:25 NEJHS Tuesday & Wednesday
2:30-3:00

☐ Yes ☐ No I would allow a recorder to be used.

_____

The subject a substitute would be needed for

From: Mrs. Rennels, Title I Date out: September 8, 1976

To: 3rd & 4th Grade Teachers Date Back: No later than Sept. 9, 1976

Subject: Title I Schedule

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Tentative suggestions:

12:05-12:30 4 B

12:30-12:55 3 S

:00-1:25 3 H

1:30-1:55 4 S

2:00-2:25 4 T

2:30-3:00 3 K

Students with reading problems I know about:

Additional names:

Comments: _____

_____

_____

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