

1973

The Organization of a Citizens Advisory Council in the West Richland Community Unit #2 School District, 1972-73

Robert L. Craft

Eastern Illinois University

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THE ORGANIZATION OF A CITIZENS

ADVISORY COUNCIL IN THE WEST RICHLAND

COMMUNITY UNIT # 2 SCHOOL DISTRICT-1972-73
(TITLE)

BY

Robert L. Craft
=

FIELD EXPERIENCE

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

EDUCATIONAL SPECIALIST

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1973

YEAR

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

12/10/1973
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12/10/1973
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The writer also wishes to extend his gratitude to the Board of Education of the West Richland Community Unit School District for making this undertaking possible.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The role of the public school has changed in the second half of the twentieth century as it has attempted to meet the needs of the community.

Institutions of public education have found themselves in a setting in which change has become an essential element.¹ It has become increasingly apparent that the shocks generated by social change have led most educators to become more aware of the necessity of wider involvement of the various components of the community in educational planning and decision making.

Research has shown that when citizens are involved in studying school needs they support these needs more fully than when they are not involved.² People have come to want to be in on processes within their schools.

Many educators in the past have avoided advisory groups. Modern day conditions, however, have mandated

¹ M. R. Sumption, "A Concept of Community Development," A Casebook Guide for Consultants and Community Leaders (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1969), p. 1.

² Donald Bogin, Frank Crazian, and Charles Harrison, School Communications Ideas That Work (Chicago: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1972), p. 24.

that school systems account to their patrons and share with them the decision making processes.

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT. The chief purpose for undertaking this project was most effectively illustrated by a survey of the West Richland Community Unit District conducted during September, 1972. The survey was designed and conducted by this writer to assess the degree of communication and understanding between the school and community. A copy of the survey was included in Appendix IV. A summary of the results are tabulated below.

175 questionnaires were submitted with 70% of those polled responding.

93% of those responding had never attended a board meeting.

92% of the respondents had no vague idea of the amount of the school tax levy.

69% of those polled felt the school was not adequately meeting the needs of the students.

95% of the respondents stated a belief that a Citizens Advisory Council could serve a useful purpose.

85% expressed a willingness to serve on a Citizens Advisory Council if appointed.

The results of the study pointed to some outstanding deficiencies in the area of school-community relations:

(1) little or no community participation was in evidence, (2) there was no information disseminating procedure in evidence, (3) much indication of a desire to achieve a greater degree of community involvement was evident.

These findings partially caused the West Richland

Board of Education to consider the establishment of a Citizens Advisory Council.

There was an additional factor which contributed to the purpose of the project. The newly developed procedure for the supervision and recognition of public schools in Illinois made mandatory a formal avenue of school-community involvement during the development of the district plan for the 1973-74 school year.

It was emphasized that the primary purpose of the project was to develop better school-community relations rather than to conform to the above mentioned requirements.

LIMITATIONS. Limitations of this project were made necessary by the comprehensive field of activities that were made possible.

1. This activity was limited to the West Richland Community Unit District.

2. The span of time was limited to the school year 1972-73.

3. The meetings of the Citizens Advisory Council were limited to five for the school year. The phases of involvement were orientation, organization, and implementation.

DEFINITION OF TERMS. Definition of terms was made to clarify and provide continuity of meaning.

1. Citizens Advisory Council was defined by Menge and Farence.³

³J. Wilmer Menge and Roland C. Farence, Working Together for Better Schools (New York: American Book Company, 1953), p. 123.

A Citizens Advisory Council is an advisory group with no legal authority to make decisions whose main purpose is to determine the voice of the people in relation to school decisions.

2. The Board of Education was referred to as a seven man group locally elected and empowered by the State Legislature to conduct the local school program in accordance with previously enacted legislation.

3. Consultative Services were defined as groups or individuals representing some agency with experience and knowledge helpful to the operation of the Citizens Advisory Council.

4. Selection Committee as used in this project was an impartial group of three selected by the Citizens Advisory Council and the Board of Education to nominate prospective members for appointment to the council by the Board of Education.

5. The orientation process was a series of activities designed to familiarize the newly formed council members with the work of the council.

6. The Charter was the formal authorization of the Board of Education for the formation of the Citizens Advisory Council.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION. This activity was carried out in the West Richland Community Unit District during the 1972-73 school year.

The West Richland District is a relatively small school accommodating grades K-12. It is located in the western area of Richland County, Illinois. The total

area encompassed by the system is 122 square miles. The assessed valuation is \$12,000,000. Enrollment has remained fairly constant at around 650 students.

The writer was given authority by the West Richland board of Education in September, 1972, to develop plans and recommendations to carry out this project. Throughout the school year 1972-73, he worked in close cooperation with both the Board and the Citizens Advisory Council.

It should be emphasized at this point that no activities were undertaken except under direction of the Board of Education. This project was meant from the beginning to be completely under the direction of the Board.

An attempt was made to determine practices that had been successful in other schools and to adapt these practices to the situation wherever applicable.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE. An effort was made to review the literature pertaining to Citizens Advisory Councils. The comprehensive field covered prohibited total inclusion in this paper.

Abner and Eardley⁴ wrote that the community should become involved when the educational planner gathers and analyzes data. Much evidence has suggested that this involvement may be the key to the success of any given project.

⁴George Abner and Bill Eardley, "Guidelines for Developing Educational Specifications," Illinois Career Journal, XXX (Autumn, 1972), p. 22.

Betty Deshler and John L. Erlich concurred in an article published in the Phi Delta Kappan.⁵ They stated that parents, community residents, and students have enormous amounts of energy and time and that this can combine with that of the professionals to bring about needed and desirable changes in the schools.

A public relations handbook for school officials⁶ was recently published which devoted much of its content to the area of Citizens Advisory Councils. In addition to its emphasis on the importance of such advisory groups, reference was also made to the fact that Boards of Education must react to recommendations made. While citizens groups have no legal authority, their participation in decision making processes has been indispensable to many cases.

In a publication produced by the State of Illinois Division of Vocational Education and Rehabilitation,⁷ it was also stated that the major function of an advisory group is to advise and counsel the educational system's administration and instructional staff in planning, implementing, and maintaining the educational program. The administrative authority for the program is vested in the various local boards of education.

⁵Betty Deshler and John L. Erlich, "Citizen Involvement: Evolution in Revolution," Phi Delta Kappan, LIV (November, 1972), p. 39.

⁶Bogin, Grazian, and Harrison, op. cit., pp. 24-28.

⁷Advisory Committees--Organization and Use in Vocational and Technical Education. (Springfield: Division of Vocational and Technical Education, 1968), p. 5.

A suggested procedure for the organization of a Citizens Advisory Council was outlined in a publication authored by Hofstrand and Phipps. Their main emphasis was on careful planning and complete involvement of the board of education in the activities of the Citizens Advisory Council.⁸ They also advocated organizations that were school sponsored and continuous in operation.

The basis for citizen involvement in educational planning was first established in Illinois in 1971. The following quote was taken from the inaugural address of Michael Bakalis, Illinois Superintendent of Public Instruction, on January 11, 1971.⁹

Education in the 1970's will require more than constitutional directives. It will call for a frank assessment of our educational weaknesses and a continuation of our educational strengths. It will call for a participatory democracy which will truly make the educational enterprise a public one.

The dominating idea which has emerged from this publication was that information must be compiled on what the people of Illinois want their children to gain from a public education.

Following the development of the above mentioned report, Circular Series A-160 was revised. This document called for major revisions in the definition of standards for the recognition and supervision of the

⁸Richard Hofstrand and Lloyd Phipps, "Advisory Councils for Education, A Handbook." (Urbana: Rurban Educational Development Laboratory, 1971), pp. 7-31.

⁹Action Goals for the Seventies. (Springfield: Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1972), p. v.

public schools of Illinois. The content of the document called for comprehensive local planning and evaluation of educational programs. Possibly the most significant revision involved the requirement that every district in the state develop a written program plan through widespread community involvement and participation.¹⁰

A publication of the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1972 was devoted entirely to the issue of parental involvement in educational programs.¹¹ Public Law 91-230 gave the United States Commissioner of Education the power to require local education agencies to involve parents in any federally financed program. As a result, regulations were issued requiring local school districts to establish parent councils.

A very useful booklet setting forth the duties and functions of an individual advisory council member was published by the State of Illinois Board of Vocational Education and Rehabilitation at about the same period in time.¹² It has found its place as a guide for members.

¹⁰The Illinois Program for Evaluation, Supervision, and Recognition of Schools. (Springfield: State of Illinois Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1972), p. 1.

¹¹Parental Involvement in Title I ESEA. (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1972), p. iii.

¹²Advisory Council Member. (Springfield: State of Illinois Board of Vocational and Technical Education, 1972), pp. 1-15.

Most recommendations for the operation of a council include a charter and operational guidelines developed cooperatively by the council and the board of education. A sample guide was developed by the Illinois Citizen's Education Council and the Urban Educational Development Laboratory. An outline of suggested selection and appointment procedures was also included.¹³

The review of literature has clearly shown a need for more active citizen participation in educational decision making. It seems likely that the use of such citizens groups will increase as more legal mandates become a reality.

It should be emphasized that State of Illinois agencies are available for consultation in such areas of endeavor.

¹³Lloyd J. Phipps and Kenneth Knell, The How of Successful Citizens Advisory Committee Operation. (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1968), pp. 1-14.

CHAPTER II

CHRONOLOGICAL LOG OF ACTIVITIES

- AUGUST 15, 1972--The writer assumed his duties as Assistant Superintendent and Guidance Director in the West Richland Community Unit District #2, Noble, Illinois.
- AUGUST 24, 1972--The writer attended a meeting held in Mt. Vernon, Illinois. The meeting was sponsored by Region VI of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The purpose of the meeting was a discussion of the proposed revision of the A-160 document. Much emphasis was placed on the community involvement aspects.
- SEPTEMBER 5, 1972--A discussion was held by the writer with the Unit Superintendent concerning the idea of organizing a Citizens Advisory Council in the West Richland System.
- SEPTEMBER 10, 1972--A second discussion was held between the above mentioned parties and the decision was made to submit the proposal at the next board meeting.
- SEPTEMBER 11, 1972--A community survey was prepared and distributed by the writer to school patrons for the purpose of assessing the degree of community participation in the school.
- SEPTEMBER 15, 1972--A letter was sent to the Illinois Association of School Boards, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Rurban Educational Development Laboratory, and the Illinois Citizens Education Council for information concerning the organization and operation of a Citizens Advisory Council.
- SEPTEMBER 16, 1972--Library research was conducted.
- SEPTEMBER 18, 1972--Preliminary discussions of this project were held during the regular meeting of the West Richland Board of Education.

SEPTEMBER 28, 1972--A conference was held with Dr. Shuff of Eastern Illinois University to obtain information on the conduct of the Educational Specialist Field Experience. A meeting was also held on this date with Dr. Garland of Eastern Illinois University to learn his experiences with Citizens Advisory Councils as a former school administrator.

OCTOBER 2, 1972--A discussion was held between the writer and Merle Holsen, Superintendent of the Hutsonville, Illinois School System. Mr. Holsen had recently completed a project similar to this.

OCTOBER 3, 1972--Mr. Lee Shafer, Assistant Superintendent of the East Richland Schools, related his experiences with Citizens Advisory Councils to the writer.

OCTOBER 16, 1972--A plan was presented to the West Richland Board for the organization of a Citizens Advisory Council. A resolution was passed giving this writer authority to develop plans and proceed toward the organization of a council.

OCTOBER 18, 1972--The Noble High School Faculty held its regular monthly meeting. The writer presented a report to them outlining preliminary plans for the organization of a citizens group. Several suggestions were offered for the development of the program.

OCTOBER 20, 1972--The West Richland Education Association invited the writer to meet with its members to discuss plans for the advisory group. This organization extended its sanction of the project and pledged complete cooperation.

OCTOBER 30, 1972--The regular meeting of the Professional Administrators Advisory Council of the Olney Central College was attended by the writer. Some information was received which later proved helpful.

NOVEMBER 4, 1972--Research was conducted in the Eastern Illinois University Library.

NOVEMBER 11, 1972--The West Richland Board of Education met to discuss selection procedures for prospective appointees to the advisory group. A list of names was developed and the writer was authorized to send a letter of invitation to each prospective member.

NOVEMBER 16, 1972--A conference was held with Dr. Gerhard Matzner, Eastern Illinois University, concerning the legal aspects of advisory groups in public schools.

NOVEMBER 17, 1972--Mr. Lee Shores of the University of Illinois was contacted by telephone. Mr. Shores was

a representative of the Urban Educational Development Laboratory and the Illinois Citizens Education Council. Mr. Shores agreed to furnish printed materials and other services through his agency.

- NOVEMBER 20, 1972--Recommendations on the selection and appointment of council members were presented to the board by the writer. Nine persons were approved for appointment.
- NOVEMBER 21, 1972--Letters of appointment were prepared and sent to prospective members.
- NOVEMBER 22, 1972--Library research was conducted to gather information for further developing plans.
- DECEMBER 11, 1972--A meeting was attended at the Olney Central College concerning Citizens Advisory Councils and their function in educational institutions.
- DECEMBER 18, 1972--The first meeting of the newly formed Citizens Advisory Council was scheduled for January 16, 1973.
- DECEMBER 19, 1972--Consultative services were obtained for the first meeting of the council through Olney Central College.
- DECEMBER 20, 1972--A meeting was held with the writer and Dr. Donald Smitley of Eastern Illinois University. Dr. Smitley was the instructor of Education 602.
- JANUARY 3, 1973--Plans for the first meeting of the Citizens Advisory Council were finalized.
- JANUARY 16, 1973--The first council meeting was held. The entire advisory group, the school administration, consultants, and members of the board were present.
- JANUARY 19, 1973--A charter and operational guidelines were begun to be developed.
- JANUARY 28, 1973--Future plans for the work of the council were discussed by the board.
- FEBRUARY 8, 1973--The course offered by Olney Central College was begun. The course pertained entirely to the operation of Citizens Advisory Councils in educational institutions.
- FEBRUARY 9, 1973--The second session of the above mentioned course was held.
- FEBRUARY 15, 1973--The third session of the course was held.

- FEBRUARY 16, 1973--The final session of the course was held. A total of 9 persons completed it.
- FEBRUARY 23, 1973--The charter and operational guidelines were completed and prepared for presentation to the council.
- MARCH 6, 1973--The organizational meeting of the council was held. Officers were elected and the charter and operational guidelines approved.
- MARCH 22, 1973--The writer conferred with Chairman Paul Brown to develop an agenda for the next meeting.
- APRIL 10, 1973--The Citizens Advisory Council met in regular session.
- MAY 8, 1973--The regular meeting of the Citizens Advisory Council was held.
- JUNE 1, 1973--The first draft of this paper was begun.
- JUNE 6, 1973--The regular monthly meeting of the Citizens Advisory Council was held.
- JUNE 20, 1973--The first draft of this paper was completed and submitted for approval.
- JUNE 28, 1973--The writer conferred with Dr. Gerhard Matzner and Dr. Donald Smitley concerning revisions and preparation of final copies of this paper.
- AUGUST 1, 1973--Final copies of this paper were completed and submitted to the Eastern Illinois University Graduate School.

CHAPTER III

SELECTED ACTIVITY ANALYSES

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the activities employed in establishing and implementing the Citizens Advisory Council in the West Richland Community Unit Schools.

I: PRIMARY CONSIDERATIONS

A: DETERMINATION OF NEED

The community survey previously referred to served to amply demonstrate to the West Richland Board of Education the need for a Citizens Advisory Council.

Time was allotted in several board meetings early in the school year for a further determination of the need for such an advisory body. A number of areas of agreement were reached by consensus. The most pertinent of these were listed:

1. Community laymen seemed to know little of the school program.
2. A high degree of apathy had existed in the community.
3. Some criticism of board policy had been evident which may have resulted from lack of communication.

4. No effective communications instrument was available to bridge the gap between the school and its patrons.

On October 16, 1972, the West Richland Board passed a resolution which authorized the writer to develop plans and recommendations for the establishment of a Citizens Advisory Council.

RATIONALE. Since lay participation has been needed everywhere, a Citizens Advisory Council should originate in the manner that is most feasible and desirable in a particular community.¹⁴ Certainly, citizens have not been required to wait for a board of education to take the initiative in establishing such a body.

Observations of other Citizens Advisory Councils throughout Illinois revealed that the most successful ones were those sponsored and welcomed by the various boards of education. It was the decision of the West Richland Board of Education that it could most nearly realize its objectives by assuming the initiative in the organization and establishment of the Citizens Advisory Council.

OBJECTIVES. Hofstrand and Phipps stated that a board of education in establishing and using advisory groups should first understand thoroughly what it is doing and why.¹⁵

¹⁴Hofstrand and Phipps, op. cit., p. 7.

¹⁵Hofstrand and Phipps, op. cit., p. 8.

The following objectives of citizens councils were developed by the West Richland Board in its regular meeting in November, 1972.

1. To provide a means of bridging the gap between the school and community. This would be accomplished when greater support and understanding of the school program was in evidence.

2. To enlarge the scope of community participation in school affairs. This would be accomplished when a greater number of school patrons had become involved in the school program.

3. To obtain much needed assistance in the formulation of school policy. This would be accomplished when the Citizens Advisory Council had provided input into the decision making processes.

4. To improve the public relations aspect of the school operation. This would be accomplished when the Citizens Advisory Council had initiated a program of public relations.

CONSULTATIVE SERVICES. Many of the difficulties that have been experienced with advisory groups have resulted because the councils were hastily created for some special purpose or some emergency. These groups were usually launched without adequate understanding by those involved or affected by the functions and relationships of the group.

The decision was made to follow the procedural recommendations of the Rurban Educational Development

Laboratory and Illinois Citizens Education Council. Modifications were made to adapt to local needs and conditions. Further consultative assistance was provided by the staff of the Department of Educational Administration of Eastern Illinois University.

A summary description of these agencies is included in Appendix III.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE BOARD TO THE COUNCIL. Much resistance to community participation has been expressed by boards of education because of the feeling that many such groups have attempted to infringe on the legal decision making responsibility of the board. This was the major objection of the West Richland Board to the formation of the Citizens Advisory Council.

A research of the legal functions of advisory groups clarified this point. The following conclusions were drawn.

1. A board of education or administrative body may request information and opinions from any individual or group.¹⁶
2. A board of education or administrative body may establish a group from which to solicit advice and assistance.¹⁷
3. Many federal and state agencies have actively used advisory groups for many years.¹⁸

¹⁶Hofstrand and Phipps, op. cit., p. 9.

¹⁷Hofstrand and Phipps, op. cit., p. 8.

¹⁸Ibid.

4. During the school year 1972-73, the Illinois Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction developed guidelines for supervision and recognition of lay advisory groups.¹⁹

5. The Vocational Education Act of 1963 and the Amendments of 1968 both called for the organization of and guidelines for use of advisory groups.¹⁹

These research activities served to assure the Board of Education that advisory groups in the local educational program were of increasing relevance. The activity further clarified their understanding of the relationship of the advisory group to the Board.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION. A number of the preliminary activities of the West Richland Board has indicated an awareness of the need to establish clear understanding of the relationship between the Citizens Advisory Council and the Board. This relationship is more clearly illustrated in the administrative organization diagram below.

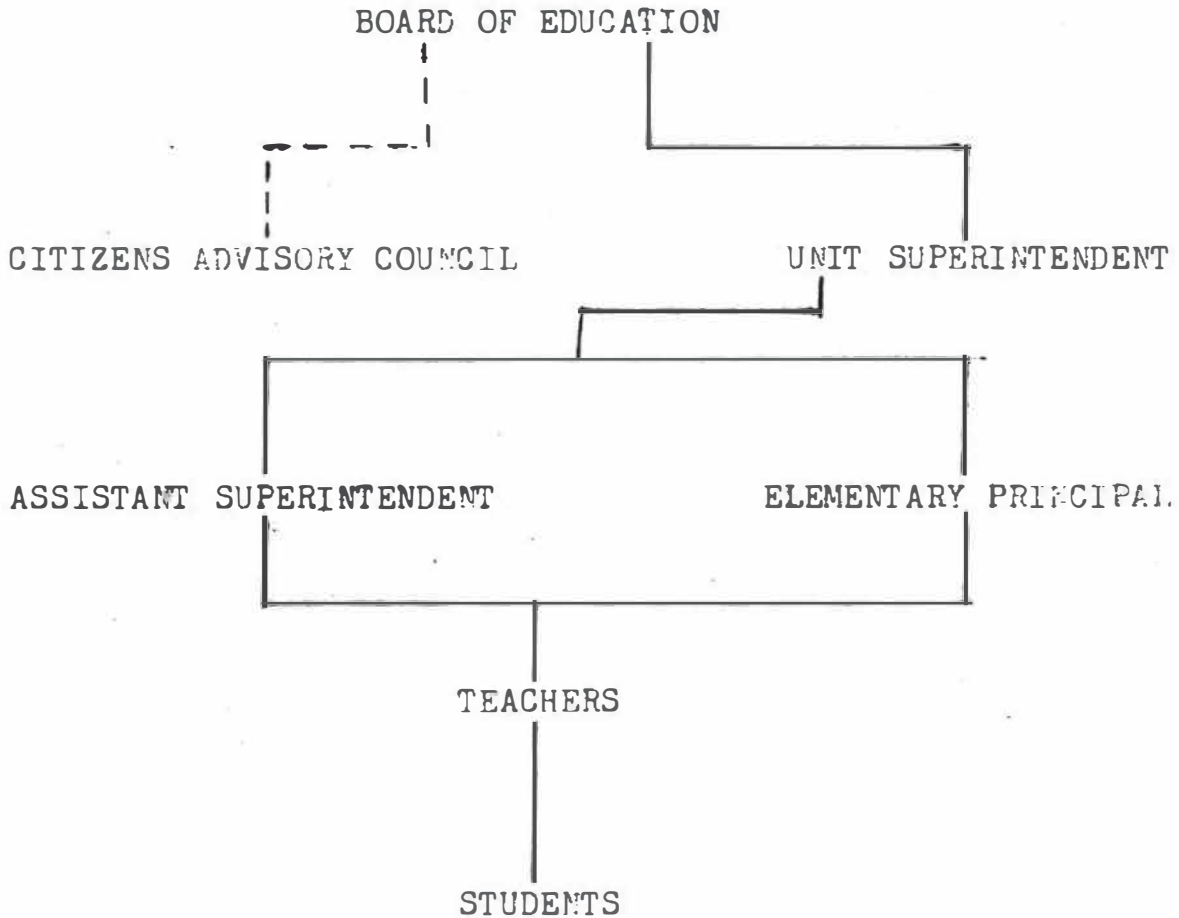
II: SELECTION, APPOINTMENT, AND ORIENTATION

One of the most carefully planned aspects of the

¹⁹Illinois Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. "The Illinois Program for Evaluation, Supervision, and Recognition of Schools." (Springfield, 1972), Sections 1-3.

²⁰United States Congress. Vocational Education Acts of 1968, HR 18366, 90th Congress, 1968, Title I-Part A-Section 104.

development of the Citizens Advisory Council was that of selection of members and their induction into the work of the organization.



ADMINISTRATIVE RELATIONSHIP _____

ADVISORY RELATIONSHIP-----

SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT. It was understood and agreed by the Board of Education that an impartial and representative selection committee should be utilized for the nomination of prospective members for appointment to the council. This procedure was later provided for in the charter and guidelines for operation.

The initial members of the Council were not selected by a nominating committee. This phase of the selection process was done by discussion and consensus of the Board. It was the opinion of the writer that initial selection of members should have been done by a temporary selection committee. The Board disagreed with this suggestion due to the fact that they wished to involve the Citizens Advisory Council in the development of the selection procedure.

The regular meeting of the West Richland Board of Education held on October 16, 1972, was used for the purpose of discussion of candidates for appointment to the Council. An information summary of the prospective appointees was developed. The use of this summary served to enable the Board to select prospective members with a reasonable degree of certainty that all areas of the community were fairly represented.

It was noted that a greater number of women should have been appointed. It was also noted that the size and nature of the West Richland System precluded a wide diversity of backgrounds.

After the selection process was completed, each candidate was sent a letter of invitation to serve on the Council. Upon receipt of an affirmative reply, a letter of appointment approved by the Board and bearing official signatures was sent to each of the approved candidates. A copy of the letter of appointment was included in the official minutes of

the Board. Names of the appointees are included in Appendix II.

The Board made the decision that the Council should include nine members. Some suggestions were later voiced from various sources that this was not a sufficiently large number. The opinion of the writer was that the group should have been larger. However, the size of the community and its lack of diversity seemed to warrant no larger number in the judgment of the Board.

ORIENTATION. The first meeting of the newly formed Citizens Advisory Council was held on January 16, 1973. A copy of the agenda of all meetings is included in Appendix I.

The goal for the first meeting of the Council was to establish an understanding between the Board of Education and the Council as to how the program should be operated. In attendance were all members of the Council, five members of the board of Education, and three administrators. Mr. Carl Pampe of the Illinois Eastern Junior College attended as a special consultant. Much interest and enthusiasm was evident.

The Illinois Eastern Junior College offered a course in their Continuing Education Division designed expressly for those involved in the work of advisory groups in education. The course outline was prepared by the Rurban Educational Development Laboratory of the University of Illinois. The newly formed group decided to request the course to be taught in the

West Richland High School so as to be conveniently located to each interested person. A tentative date to begin was set for February 8, 1973. This decision was considered to be a significant development in the orientation of the Citizens Advisory Council.

The course was subsequently held on the dates of February 8, 9, 15, and 16, 1973. Eight persons enrolled including 5 members of the Citizens Advisory Council, a representative of the Board of Education, and two persons on the West Richland Staff. So far as was determined by the writer, this was a unique feature in the development of any advisory group in Illinois. The offering of the course helped to fulfill the goal of orientation.

It was suggested by one member that the work of the group should have progressed more rapidly. It was generally agreed by the Citizens Advisory Council as well as outside consultants that the orientation phase was time well spent.

ORGANIZATION. Upon completion of the orientation phase, the organizational meeting was set for March 6, 1973.

The most significant action taken by the group was the ratification and approval of the proposed charter and operational guidelines. The original draft was developed by the Board of Education and presented to the Citizens Advisory Council. The documents were approved as presented with the exception of two

amendments. These dealt with the designation of the calendar year for operational purposes and the provision of a designated member of the Citizens Advisory Council to attend each regular meeting of the Board of Education.

The West Richland Board did not approve the proposed charter and operational guidelines until after the Citizens Advisory Council had offered its revisions and had approved the documents. This procedure was followed so as to assure the opportunity for input from the advisory group.

The proposed charter and operational guidelines were taken chiefly from a suggested outline developed by the Rural Educational Development Laboratory. Revisions were made to conform to local needs.

Significant indications were evident which showed a serious attempt by both the Board and the Council to establish a working relationship conducive to achieving the primary objective of the organization for better communication. The following major items were extracted from the approved operational guidelines which illustrated this point.

1. The Board appointed one of its members to attend each Council meeting. This was to be done on a rotating basis so as to allow broader participation.

2. The Citizens Advisory Council reciprocated by appointing one of its members to attend each regularly scheduled meeting of the Board. This was also done on a

rotating basis to allow broader participation

3. The Board agreed to furnish to the Council a copy of present policies and by-laws.

4. The two organizations agreed to exchange minutes of each meeting with this function being handled by the district office.

IMPLEMENTATION. Following the organization and the orientation activities, subsequent meetings of the Council were held on April 10, May 8, and June 6, 1973. These meetings were planned jointly between the school officials and the executive committee of the Citizens Advisory Council.

The general consensus was that the implementation of the work of the organization could best be accomplished through providing informational reports and other pertinent information such as a discussion of the school curriculum and other specialized areas such as guidance services.

A meeting of the executive committee was planned during the months of July and August, 1973, for the purpose of laying plans for activities during the 1973-74 school year.

Lack of sufficient time and background information precluded any involvement of the Council in school policy study and formulation during the 1972-73 school year. This phase of involvement would probably be of high priority during the second year of operation when such involvement would be encouraged.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY. The field experience project chosen by this writer was the organization and operation of a Citizens Advisory Council in the West Richland Community Unit District. The time span included was during the 1972-73 school year.

There was no disagreement that the role of the public school has changed during recent years. Great emphasis has become focalized on needs fulfillment of all aspects of the community and accountability to the tax payer who ultimately provides support for schools.

The public has become aware of a desire to participate in educational planning and decision making in its institutions of learning. Due to the reticence of many school officials to include the public, a number of mandates requiring citizen participation have come into existence.

The main purpose of the undertaking of this project by the West Richland Board of Education was the result of a community survey which illustrated a communications gap between the school and the community and a desire to bridge that gap through some avenue

of public involvement.

The rationale followed by the West Richland Board was that of assuming responsibility for the organization of the Council rather than allowing it to spring up without direction. The underlying reasoning was that the Board could achieve its objectives only through close cooperation with the Council. Therefore, most details were planned by the Board and then discussed, revised, and mutually agreed upon with the Council.

The following summary of activities is noted.

1. A comprehensive community survey was conducted to assess the degree of citizen involvement in the educational program. It was found that little such involvement had been in evidence, a need existed for more community participation, and a desire was shown by the citizens to make available a formal avenue of participation. The survey served to convince the West Richland Board of the need for a Citizens Advisory Council.

2. Rationale for action and objectives were developed by the Board to clarify its position. This contributed to a better understanding of the work of an advisory council and its relationship to a board.

3. The decision was made to follow the procedural recommendations of selected consultative agencies. This enabled all parties to become more aware of how successful and unsuccessful projects had been carried out.

4. Selection of prospective appointees was done by

administrative and board consensus. Community factions, occupational background, and geographic distribution were considered. In the opinion of the writer, an impartial selection committee should have been utilized in the initial selection procedure. A very real possibility of community criticism and loss of confidence existed by not using the selection committee. The West Richland Board made the decision to not make use of a selection committee until the procedure could be worked out with the advisory group. No problems were encountered as a result of the method used.

5. Appointment to the Council was done by official board action, and an official letter of appointment was sent to each appointee. This served to further strengthen the relationship of the Board to the Council.

6. Orientation of the Council was carefully planned. What appeared to be the most unique feature of the orientation phase was the offering of the college credit course for Citizens Advisory Council Members. Many points were taught to the participants which could not have been impressed upon them except by some outside source. Enthusiasm was high and a good morale was established.

Other orientation activities included a guest speaker, Mr. Carl Pauspe who had served on the East Richland Citizens Advisory Council. A tour of the school facilities and a social activity were included.

The organizational meeting was devoted to the

election of officers and approval of the official charter and operational guidelines.

7. Implementation of the Council and its work was begun during the final three meetings. The main activities were a discussion of the school curriculum and a presentation from the guidance department.

RECOMMENDATIONS. The following recommendations were offered as suggestions for future changes and areas which should have been executed differently.

1. The number of members on the Council should be fifteen. This would provide a wider diversity of input and better community representation. This number would be adequate for the population of the district.

2. A greater number of women should be included. Consideration should also be given to students as participants since their ideas could complement those of the adults.

3. A selection committee should have been used in the initial procedure even though the operational guidelines provide for this in future selections.

4. Specific criteria for selection should have been formalized rather than done at random. This would have provided more objectivity to the process.

5. Difficulty was experienced in obtaining some consultative services. Funds should have been allocated to cover this expense so as to facilitate obtaining these services.

6. Orientation of future appointees should have

been provided for in the operational guidelines. Future appointees should be oriented in a manner similar to that of the initial members.

7. The practice of board representation at each council meeting should be continued. Similarly, council representation at each board meeting should be continued.

8. The publicity of the Council should be refined and expanded. This should include not only radio and newspaper coverage, but also a formal avenue of communication with the school clientele.

APPENDIX I

MEETING AGENDA

AGENDA
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
WEST RICHLAND COMMUNITY UNIT DISTRICT #2
JANUARY 16, 1973
7:00 P.M.

- I: Open Meeting--Robert Craft
- II: Message from the Unit Superintendent--Jon Frohock
- III: Welcome from the Board of Education--Ralph Weber
- IV: Benefits and Functions of the Citizens Advisory Council--REML Staff Consultant
- V: Experiences with Citizens Advisory Councils--Mr. Carl Pampe
- VI: Adjournment
- VII: Refreshments and Social Activity

The Meeting will begin Promptly at 7:00 P.M. in the Noble High School Library.

AGENDA
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
WEST RICHLAND COMMUNITY DISTRICT #2
MARCH 6, 1973
7:00 P.M.

- I: Open Meeting--Robert Craft
- II: Report of Unit Superintendent--Jon Frohock
- III: Discussion of Proposed Charter and Operational Guidelines--(Enclosed)
- IV: Election of Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary
- V: Questions Asked of and by the Council--Mr. Carl Pampe, Consultant
- VI: Adjournment
- VII: Refreshments

AGENDA
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
WEST RICHLAND COMMUNITY UNIT DISTRICT #2
APRIL 10, 1973
7:00 P.M.

- I: Tour of Noble Grade School (Meet at NGS at 7:00 P.M.)
- II: Roll Call--Noble High School Library--7:30 P.M.
- III: Approval of Minutes
- IV: Superintendent's Report
- V: Questions of and by the Council
- VI: Tour of Noble High School
- VII: Refreshments

AGENDA
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
WEST RICHLAND COMMUNITY UNIT DISTRICT #2
MAY 8, 1973
7:00 P.M.

- I: Tour Noble High School
- II: Open Meeting--Chairman Paul Brown
- III: Roll Call
- IV: Approve Minutes
- V: Review and Discussion of Noble High School Curriculum
- VI: Questions of and by the Council
- VII: Adjournment
- VIII: Refreshments

AGENDA
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
WEST RICHLAND COMMUNITY UNIT # 2
JUNE 4, 1973
8:00 P.M.

- I: Open Meeting--Chairman Paul Brown
- II: Roll Call
- III: Approval of Minutes
- IV: Presentation of Information on Guidance Services
- V: Discussion of 1973-74 Plans
- VI: Questions of and by the Council
- VII: Adjournment
- VIII: Refreshments

APPENDIX II

CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS
1972-73

Eugene Everett	Rural Route #2, Noble, Ill.	723-2466
Danny Thomann	Rural Route #2, Noble, Ill.	723-2378
Paul Brown	Noble, Ill.	723-2447
Mary Clark	113 East Cherry, Noble, Ill.	723-2292
Howard Craig	312 East North, Noble, Ill.	723-2148
James Cox	Rural Route #2, Noble, Ill.	723-2541
Eldon Oaster	Rural Route #2, Noble, Ill.	723-2470
Ray Lynn	Rural Route #1, Noble, Ill.	854-2138
Bill Herdes	Rural Route #2, Noble, Ill.	752-2996

APPENDIX III

CONSULTATIVE AGENCIES

The Rurban Educational Development Laboratory was initiated in 1967 to assist in the improvement of general and vocational education opportunities in the rural and urban areas. "Rurban" is a contraction of the terms rural and urban and includes the communities of less than 200,000 population. The major efforts of REDL have been directed in the areas of promoting and assisting Citizens Advisory Councils and conducting research activities relating to their function.

This agency was especially useful in the West Richland Program in the following ways:

1. Provided a guest speaker for the orientation program.
2. Provided film strips, publications, and verbal advice for the project.

The ICEC, Illinois Citizens Education Council, was formed to maintain and expand lay citizen interest and involvement in local educational programs. In 1968, REDL and ICEC agreed to work together to provide increased services. REDL has assumed its role as a consultant and communications center for ICEC activities.

APPENDIX IV
COMMUNITY SURVEY

SEPTEMBER 10, 1972

Dear School Patron:

The following questions were designed to assist the Board of Education in assessing the degree of participation by school patrons in school affairs. Please enter an appropriate yes or no response to each item on the survey. Prompt return of the forms in the enclosed stamped envelope will expedite computation of results.

1. Have you ever attended a meeting of the Board of Education? _____

2. Do you know the amount of the budget for your school for 1972-73? _____

3. Do you know the amount of the school tax levy for 1972-73? _____

4. Do you feel the school is meeting the needs of its students? _____

5. Do you feel that a Citizens Advisory Council could serve any useful purpose in the community? _____

6. Would you be willing to serve on a Citizens Advisory Council if appointed? _____

APPENDIX V
WEST RICHLAND COMMUNITY UNIT #2
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
CHARTER

WEST RICHLAND COMMUNITY UNIT #2
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
CHARTER

The Board of Education of West Richland Community Unit #2 on this 19th day of February, 1973, authorizes the establishment of a continuing committee to be known as "The Citizens Advisory Council". This council is to be organized and conducted under procedures to be proposed by the Superintendent of Schools after receiving advice from the school staff and other suitable consultants and upon approval by the Board of Education.

The Citizens Advisory Council is not regarded as a substitute for any other form of citizen participation in school affairs. It is intended to be a supplement and to stimulate other types of citizen participation.

The purpose of the Citizens Advisory Council will be to serve as an arm of the Board of Education by providing advice and assistance to the Board.

The Board of Education reserves the right to dissolve the Citizens Advisory Council at any time for any reason.

The Citizens Advisory Council is expected to contribute to the improvement of the education provided by the school system by:

1. Studying and surveying continuously the educational needs of the district's clientele.

2. Reviewing, analyzing, developing, and proposing school policies.
3. Working with the administrative, instructional, and non instructional staffs of the school system cooperatively to develop and execute programs and procedures which implement policies approved by the Board of Education.
4. Facilitating communication between the staffs of the school system and the people of the district.
5. Studying the effects of existing and new educational programs in operation.
6. Serving as a "sounding board" of community opinion on items proposed by the Board of Education.
7. Initiating study and proposals on educational issues pertinent to the school and community.

In authorizing the development of the Citizens Advisory Council, the Board of Education pledges complete cooperation in the work of the Council. The Citizens Advisory Council will be expected to operate within the guidelines set forth.

APPENDIX VI
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

The following guidelines shall be followed in the organization, operation, and review of the Citizens Advisory Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council.

I. Organization of the Council

A. Membership

1. The Council shall consist of nine (9) members.
2. The members of the Council will be recommended to the Board of Education by a Selection Committee. The Board retains the right to disapprove individual nominations by the Selection Committee, but it will not appoint an individual who is not recommended by the Selection Committee.

B. Selection Committee

1. A selection committee will be named by the Board of Education. The Selection Committee shall consist of three (3) members, all lay citizens except one who shall be a representative of the District's administrative staff.
2. The members of the Selection Committee will be appointed for a three year period, the Selection Committee will analyze the school's service area to determine the community's factions. Based on these factions, a roster of representative individuals will be identified to serve as members and replacement members of the Council. Members of the Selection Committee may not serve as members of the Council.
3. The potential members recommended by the Selection Committee shall possess the following characteristics:
 - a. Representative of the community's factions.
 - b. Interest in education.
 - c. Willingness not to exploit their membership.
 - d. Have certain personal characteristics essential to the success of the Council

such as personal integrity, responsibility, maturity of thought and action, the ability to cooperate, constructive attitude, and tolerance of varying points of view.

4. No one is to be recommended or barred from membership because of affiliation with any organization or institution.

C. Term of Members

1. The original members of the Council will serve at least two years. At the end of the first year, the terms of the original members will be determined by lot. One-third of the members will serve for one additional year; one-third will serve for two additional years; one-third will serve for three additional years.
2. When a vacancy occurs, the newly appointed member will serve during the unexpired term of the member he replaces.
3. A person who has served a term as a member is ineligible for reappointment until one year has elapsed following the expiration of his term.
4. The year will be referred to as the calendar year in the operation of the Council.

D. Consultants

1. A member of the administrative staff and the instructional staff will be appointed to meet regularly with the Council.
2. A member of the Board of Education will be elected to meet regularly with the Council.
3. Outside consultants will be utilized as needed. Outside consultants will be approved by the Council, Board of Education, and the administrative staff prior to initial consultation.

II. Operation of the Council

- A. The Council will organize itself, determine its meeting times, select its officers and sub-committees, make its rules and formulate its program and meeting agendas provided such do not conflict with the operational guidelines set forth herein.

- B. The Board of Education will submit to the Council the current policies of the school system and any proposals for the revision of these policies.
- C. The Board of Education will react, orally and in writing, to any proposals for the revision of policies submitted by the Council.
- D. Joint meetings of the Board and the Council will be scheduled when mutually desired.
- E. The Council is urged to appoint subcommittees as needed. Some of these may be continuing committees, some may be temporary committees to deal with special problems. Subcommittees may include members of the Council, other lay citizens, members of the school staff, and students. A member of the school staff may, with the approval of the Superintendent of Schools, request the Council to name a special subcommittee to deal with problems in his field of work.
- F. The Council or any of its subcommittees may request information and counsel from the Superintendent of Schools or from any employee of the Board of Education on matters clearly related to the problems on which the subcommittees are working.
- G. Minutes of the meetings of the Council will be sent to the members of the Board of Education and to the members of the administrative, teaching, and nonprofessional staffs.
- H. The school will provide the Council and its subcommittees with the consulting and clerical services that are desirable and feasible.
- I. Publicity regarding the work of the Council and reports of the Council or its subcommittees will be released only after the approval by the Board of Education or its authorized agent.
- J. The Council will obtain approval on all proposed studies prior to inception by the Board of Education or its authorized agent.
- K. The Council as a group, or members representing the Council, will never recommend, support, or campaign for or against candidates for election to the Board of Education, take action regarding the employment, dismissal, promotion, or transfer of individual school employees, or encroach upon the prerogative of the administrative, instructional, or noninstructional staffs.

- L. The Council will designate one member on a rotating alphabetical basis to attend each regular board meeting.

III. Review of Procedures

- A. The preceding operational guidelines will be reviewed annually by the Council with before-mentioned consultants.

Recommendations for change will be conveyed to the Board of Education for perusal and action.

IV. Officers

- A. The officers will consist of a chairman, vice chairman and a secretary. These officers will be elected annually by the Council. These officers will together constitute an Executive Committee.
- B. Affiliated and subcommittees may be established and discharged by a majority of the Council.
- C. The subject or field of activity will be specified by the Council.
- D. The subcommittee may be of any size appropriate to its function. Membership may consist of students, lay citizens, and school employees. One member of the subcommittee shall also be a member of the Council.
- E. A consultant from the school system shall be appointed by the school administration at the request of the Council to meet regularly with the subcommittee. Special consultants may be enlisted pending approval by the Council.

V. Program

- A. The Council will plan and operate under an annual program and agenda of the year's meetings. Plans, topics, and goals will be included in the program.
- B. A program for each ensuing year will be discussed during the May meeting each year.
- C. Proposals by the members will be considered by the executive Committee, who will formulate a proposed annual program to be presented to the Council during the June meeting for its action.
- D. The Executive Committee, in consultation with the School Superintendent, will be responsible for planning the agenda of individual meetings.

- E. Discussion leading toward a consensus of the members will be the prevailing procedure in Council meetings. Parliamentary procedure will be used when a decision of the Council is to be recorded or transmitted.

VI. Responsibilities of Members

- A. Each member is expected to attend meetings regularly, participate in Council discussions, and serve on affiliated and subcommittees when requested to serve.
- B. Each member is expected to study carefully any problem which comes before the Council before committing himself to a final conclusion.
- C. Each member is expected to respect the right of fellow Council members by not reporting or discussing the opinions of other members outside the Council. The opinions and conclusions of the Council as a whole may be discussed.
- D. Members who fail to attend three consecutive meetings automatically lose their membership unless they present reasons for their absences acceptable to the Council.

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