

SETTING THE EDUCATION AGENDA:
A BUSINESS LEADER'S APPROACH

PRESENTED TO THE
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS'
"I CARE" CONFERENCE

REMARKS BY
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CRYSTAL CITY HYATT REGENCY HOTEL
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AASA

THANKS, BOB

IN PREPARING THESE REMARKS I CAME TO
LEARN THAT THE AVERAGE TENURE OF A SCHOOL
SUPERINTENDENT IS ABOUT FOUR AND A
HALF YEARS.

I THINK YOU OUGHT TO LOOK AT THAT
FIGURE ON THE BRIGHT SIDE. NOBODY CAN
CALL YOU ENTRENCHED MANAGEMENT.

BEING A SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT IS A DIFFICULT AND 'DEMANDING JOB, FAR MORE DIFFICULT IN SOME RESPECTS THAN BEING A CORPORATE CEO.

WE BOTH HAVE OUR PROBLEMS, BUT YOU SEEM TO OPERATE UNDER MANY MORE CONSTRAINTS AND WITH CONSIDERABLY FEWER RESOURCES THAN THOSE OF US IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

AND BECAUSE YOU FUNCTION IN THE PUBLIC ARENA, YOU ALSO ARE REQUIRED TO POSSESS MORE DIPLOMATIC SKILLS AND DEMONSTRATE THEM MORE OFTEN.

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SO ONE REASON I WAS HAPPY TO ACCEPT YOUR INVITATION WAS TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO TELL A GROUP OF FELLOW CEO'S WHO DO NOT GET ENOUGH RECOGNITION THAT THEY ARE DOING A REMARKABLE JOB UNDER SOME VERY TRYING CIRCUMSTANCES. IN FACT, THE MORE DEEPLY I BECOME INVOLVED IN MY OWN RESPONSIBILITIES AS CHAIRMAN OF THE INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, THE MORE I APPRECIATE THE COMPLEXITIES INVOLVED IN ADMINISTERING A MODERN SCHOOL SYSTEM.

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**THE SECOND REASON I'M GLAD TO BE HERE IS
TO TALK WITH YOU
ABOUT THE SUBJECT OF MANAGING CHANGE.**

**IN THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS THERE HAS BEEN A
GREAT OUTPOURING OF NATIONAL CONCERN
REGARDING THE STATUS AND FUTURE OF PUBLIC
EDUCATION IN THIS COUNTRY. VIRTUALLY
EVERY EXPRESSION OF CONCERN HAS BEEN
ACCOMPANIED BY A PACKAGE OF RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR CHANGE.**

IT MAY BE TOO SOON TO KNOW THE PRECISE
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHANGES BEING
RECOMMENDED, BUT THERE CAN'T BE MUCH DOUBT
IN ANYONE'S MIND THAT THE CENTRAL ACTORS
IN THIS PROCESS OF CHANGE ARE GOING TO BE
THE SUPERINTENDENTS -- CERTAINLY AS
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MANAGERS, AS INITIATORS.

I HAVE HAD NO DIRECT EXPERIENCE RUNNING A
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, ALTHOUGH I HAVE BEEN
INVOLVED WITH THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN A
VARIETY OF WAYS FOR THE PAST TEN YEARS.
DID, HOWEVER, TAKE THE AMERICAN CAN
COMPANY THROUGH A PERIOD OF EXTENSIVE
CHANGE AND REORGANIZATION.

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OUR PROCESS OF CHANGE WAS DIFFICULT AND,
LIKE YOUR CURRENT SITUATION IN EDUCATION,
WAS DICTATED BY EXTERNAL FORCES THAT LEFT
US LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO RESPOND.

WITHIN A PERIOD OF 40 YEARS, WE WENT
FROM A COMPANY THAT MANUFACTURED CANS TO A
COMPANY WHOSE PRIMARY BUSINESSES WERE
FINANCIAL SERVICES AND SPECIALTY RETAILING.

WE DID THIS BECAUSE WE REALLY DIDN'T HAVE
MUCH CHOICE. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND
CHANGING TECHNOLOGY TOLD US OUR DAYS WERE
NUMBERED. WE COULD EITHER SQUEEZE AS MUCH
AS POSSIBLE OUT OF A DYING BUSINESS; OR WE
COULD REORGANIZE AND DIVERSIFY,

THAT WASN'T THE WHOLE STORY THOUGH.

ONCE OUR BUSINESS CHANGES WERE UNDERWAY,
WE HAD TO GIVE SOME THOUGHT TO WHAT KIND
OF COMPANY WE WOULD BECOME IN A MANAGEMENT
SENSE.

**THE OLD AMERICAN CAN WAS A HIGHLY CENTRALIZED
AND HIERARCHICAL COMPANY. OUR NEW BUSINESSES
REQUIRED MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS THAT WERE MORE
FLEXIBLE AND WHICH LENT THEMSELVES TO
QUICKER DECISIONS. IF OUR MANAGERS HAD TO
FOLLOW THE OLD SYSTEM AND RUN EVERY
DECISION UP THE CHAIN OF COMMAND AND WAIT
FOR AN ANSWER BEFORE ACTING, THERE WASN'T
A CHANCE IN THE WORLD THAT WE WOULD
SUCCEED IN THESE NEW VENTURES.**

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WE ALSO HAD BECOME TOP HEAVY WITH MANAGERS WHO LACKED ANY REAL OPERATING RESPONSIBILITY. GOOD IDEAS WERE GETTING LOST IN OUR BUREAUCRACY. SOME OF OUR BRIGHTER YOUNG PEOPLE FELT THEIR WORKING ENVIRONMENT WAS TOO STIFLING, TOO LIMITING. THEY WANTED A CHANCE TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR ABILITIES, TO EXERCISE SOME INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT. AND THEY FOUND IT -- SOMEWHERE ELSE.

SO WE TOOK A CALCULATED GAMBLE.

WE SET UP A NEW MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

**WE TRIMMED OUR CORPORATE BUREAUCRACY AND
TOLD THE HEADS OF OUR INDIVIDUAL BUSINESSES
THAT, WITHIN SOME BROAD GUIDELINES, THEY
WERE FREE TO RUN THEIR BUSINESSES AS THEY
SAW FIT. THEY NOT ONLY HAD OPERATING
AUTHORITY. THEY ALSO HAD AUTONOMY.**

**THEY WOULD TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR OWN
OPERATIONS. THEY WOULD RECEIVE CREDIT
WHEN THEY SUCCEEDED. BUT THEY WOULD BE
HELD ACCOUNTABLE WHEN THEY DID NOT.**

AT THIS POINT, YOU PROBABLY ARE SAYING TO YOURSELVES: WONDERFUL. BILL WOODSIDE STOPPED MAKING CANS AND STARTED SELLING INSURANCE AND CATALOGUE PRODUCTS. BUT WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH US? WE ARE NOT FACED WITH A CHOICE OF BAILING OUT OR REORGANIZING. OUR PROBLEM IS HOW TO EDUCATE CHILDREN FOR THE 21ST CENTURY.

YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT. THERE IS NO APPROPRIATE COMPARISON. DEVELOPING THE RIGHT EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM IS WORLDS APART FROM DEVELOPING A NEW PRODUCT LINE OR BEEFING UP SALES.

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BUT IF YOU TAKE A BROADER VIEW AND LOOK AT SOME MAJOR EDUCATIONAL ISSUES ON THE HORIZON, YOU MAY SEE SOMETHING ELSE. You MAY SEE SOME SURPRISING SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE POSITION MANY OF YOU ARE IN TODAY, AND THE POSITION IN WHICH I FOUND MYSELF A DOZEN YEARS AGO.

THREE EXAMPLES MAY HELP MAKE THE POINT.

ONE INVOLVES THE DEMOGRAPHY OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS. THE SECOND CONCERNS RESEARCH ON FACTORS THAT SEEM TO ACCOUNT FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS. THE THIRD CONCERNS THE ROLE AND STATUS OF TEACHERS.

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SCHOOL DISTRICTS CAN BE BROKEN DOWN INTO TWO CATEGORIES: THOSE THAT ARE GAINING STUDENTS AND THOSE THAT ARE LOSING STUDENTS. THAT'S USEFUL BASIC INFORMATION. BUT THE IMPORTANT INFORMATION IS THE DATA THAT TELL YOU SOMETHING ABOUT THE SOCIO ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF STUDENTS IN BOTH KINDS OF DISTRICTS.

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CURRENT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA SAY THE ONE FACT MOST DISTRICTS CAN COUNT ON IS THAT THEIR MINORITY POPULATION WILL INCREASE. IT WILL INCREASE IN DISTRICTS THAT ARE GAINING STUDENTS. IT WILL INCREASE IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS THAT ARE LOSING STUDENTS.

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THE MINORITY POPULATION NOT ONLY WILL BE
LARGER. IT WILL BE MORE DIVERSE.

DRAMATIC CHANGES IN IMMIGRATION PATTERNS
HAVE PRODUCED IN MANY AREAS A MINORITY
POPULATION THAT MAY BE MORE DIVERSE AND
MORE COMPLEX

THAN ANY SINCE THE GREAT MIGRATIONS
FROM EUROPE AT THE TURN OF THE
CENTURY.

IF THAT PROVES TO BE TRUE, THEN A
LARGE NUMBER OF SCHOOL
SUPERINTENDENTS AND

PRINCIPALS WILL BE CONFRONTED WITH A
MIX OF CHILDREN THAT IS QUITE DIFFERENT
FROM WHAT THEY HAVE EXPERIENCED
BEFORE.

ANOTHER TREND CONCERNS THE FAMILY LIFE OF OUR SCHOOL AGE POPULATION. THIRTY YEARS AGO, 56 PERCENT OF ALL U.S. HOUSEHOLDS CONSISTED OF A FATHER, A HOUSEWIFE MOTHER AND TWO OR MORE SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN. IN 1980, THAT UNIT EXISTED IN ONLY 11 PERCENT OF U.S. HOMES. IN 1985 IT EXISTED IN ONLY SEVEN PERCENT.

IN ADDITION, DEMOGRAPHER HAROLD HODGKINSON REPORTS AN INCREASE OF EPIDEMIC PROPORTIONS IN THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN BORN OUT OF WEDLOCK, WITH A FULL 50 PERCENT OF THOSE CHILDREN BORN TO TEENAGE MOTHERS.

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**THE PATTERN, SAYS HODGKINSON IN A REPORT
PREPARED FOR THE INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL
LEADERSHIP IS NOT HARD TO PREDICT.
TEENAGERS GIVE BIRTH MORE OFTEN TO
PREMATURE BABIES. PREMATUREITY LEADS TO
LOW BIRTH WEIGHT. Low BIRTH WEIGHT IS A
GOOD PREDICTOR OF MAJOR LEARNING
DIFFICULTIES.**

SOME 3.3 MILLION BABIES ARE BORN IN THIS COUNTRY EACH YEAR. HODGKINSON'S DATA INDICATE THAT 700,000 OF THEM WILL FALL INTO A CATEGORY WHERE, IN HIS WORDS, THEY "ARE ALMOST ASSURED OF BEING EITHER EDUCATIONALLY RETARDED OR DIFFICULT TO TEACH." MOREOVER, HE SAYS, THIS GROUP IS ENTERING THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN RAPIDLY INCREASING NUMBERS.

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I REALIZE THIS IS BROAD, GENERAL, UNREFINED,
AND EVEN CONTROVERSIAL, DATA. IN ITS

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CURRENT STAGE, IT CANNOT BE USED EVEN TO
PREDICT THE EXTENT TO WHICH ANY INDIVIDUAL
SCHOOL DISTRICT WILL BE AFFECTED BY THESE
TRENDS, OR WHETHER A SCHOOL DISTRICT WILL
BE AFFECTED AT ALL.

BUT DATA LIKE THESE ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO
PROVIDE THAT KIND OF INFORMATION. IT IS
ONLY SUPPOSED TO SUGGEST TRENDS AND
PATTERNS. ITS PURPOSE IS TO RAISE QUESTIONS,
NOT PROVIDE ANSWERS.

**As A MATTER OF FACT, THE DATA THAT PROMPTED
AMERICAN CAN'S REORGANIZATION WASN'T MUCH
MORE SOPHISTICATED. WE COULDN'T USE IT TO
MAKE LONG-RANGE PLANS OR PROJECTIONS. BUT
WE COULD USE IT, AND WE DID, AS A GUIDEPOST
TO POINT US IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.**

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IN THAT SENSE, THE RAW AND UNREFINED DATA THAT AT FIRST APPEARED TO HAVE NO PRACTICAL VALUE BECAME THE BASIS FOR THE ANALYSIS WE SUBSEQUENTLY CONDUCTED ON ECONOMIC TRENDS AND CONSUMER DEMAND. IT BECAME THE IMPETUS FOR A PROCESS THAT RESULTED IN OUR LOOKING AT **120** DIFFERENT TYPES OF BUSINESSES BEFORE DECIDING ON THE TWO THAT WOULD CONSTITUTE THE NEW AMERICAN CAN COMPANY.

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THE NATURAL TENDENCY FOR US, AND FOR ANY ORGANIZATION FACING THE PROSPECT OF CHANGE, WOULD HAVE BEEN TO WAIT FOR MORE INFORMATION BEFORE MAKING A DECISION, EVEN A RESEARCH AND PLANNING DECISION. BUT MY EXPERIENCE IS THAT THE LONGER AN ORGANIZATION WAITS, THE GREATER THE RISK THAT EVENTS WILL TAKE CONTROL OF THE ORGANIZATION, AND THAT THE ORGANIZATION GRADUALLY WILL LOSE THE ABILITY TO SHAPE AND DIRECT ITS OWN FUTURE.

AASA

**THE SECOND EXAMPLE CONCERNS THE RESEARCH
ON EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS.**

**You KNOW BETTER THAN ANYONE THAT RESEARCH
IN THIS AREA SUGGESTS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL
AND ENDURING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE OCCURS,
AND IS SUSTAINED, IN THOSE SETTINGS WHERE
THERE IS EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AT THE
1? BUILDING LEVEL.**

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EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL CHANGE, THE RESEARCH SEEMS TO SAY, OCCURS IN AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE THERE ARE EXPLICIT EXPECTATIONS REGARDING STUDENTS AND LEARNING; WHERE THE PRINCIPAL FUNCTIONS AS A CATALYST RATHER THAN AS A PERSON WHO GIVES ORDERS; WHERE TEACHERS ARE INVOLVED IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS; AND WHERE PARENTS ARE APPROPRIATELY INVOLVED.

WHEN YOU COMBINE THESE FINDINGS WITH THE DEMOGRAPHIC DATA, A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS COME TO MIND.

0 Do OUR EXISTING SCHOOL SYSTEMS HAVE THE CAPACITY AND THE FLEXIBILITY TO MEET THE CHALLENGES THAT WILL BE PLACED ON THEM IN THE YEARS AHEAD?

0 HAVE WE REACHED THE POINT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION WHEN WE NEED TO BEGIN LOOKING MORE CLOSELY AT DECENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS THAT GRANT MORE AUTONOMY AT THE BUILDING LEVEL?

0 IF INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS ARE GOING TO BE GRANTED MORE AUTONOMY, WHAT KINDS OF ACCOUNTABILITY CAN BE BUILT INTO SUCH A SYSTEM?

0 IN A DECENTRALIZED SYSTEM, WHICH FUNCTIONS CAN BE DELEGATED AND WHICH CANNOT?

THESE ARE EXCEEDINGLY COMPLEX QUESTIONS. THERE IS NO QUESTION IN MY MIND THAT THE PUBLIC SECTOR IS A MUCH MORE DIFFICULT AND RESTRICTIVE ARENA IN WHICH TO ANSWER THEM THAN THE PRIVATE SECTOR WOULD BE.

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NEVERTHELESS, THESE QUESTIONS ARE NOT TOO FAR AFIELD FROM THE QUESTIONS WE AT AMERICAN CAN FIRST ASKED OURSELVES WHEN WE BEGAN TO WONDER IF OUR OLD MANAGEMENT SYSTEM COULD SUPPORT AND SUSTAIN OUR NEW BUSINESSES.

SO IF YOU ARE INCLINED TO START LOOKING INTO MATTERS LIKE THIS, YOU MAY WANT TO DO SOMETHING SIMILAR TO WHAT WE DID: INVOLVE ALL YOUR KEY PEOPLE IN YOUR PLANNING AND YOUR DECISION MAKING.

IN MY CASE, THAT MEANT OFFICERS, DIVISION
HEADS AND SOME SPECIALISTS. IN YOUR CASE,

IT COULD MEAN PRINCIPALS, SUPERVISORS,

DEPARTMENT HEADS AND HOPEFULLY TEACHERS.

WE STARTED OUT WITH JUST A HALF DOZEN

OFFICERS WHO MET ONCE A WEEK. BUT ALL OF

TOP MANAGEMENT EVENTUALLY WAS BROUGHT INTO

THE PROCESS SO WE COULD HAVE A FULL FLOW

OF IDEAS AND MAKE SURE WE CONSIDERED ALL

THE ALTERNATIVES.

THAT KIND OF PARTICIPATION CERTAINLY
HELPED ME MAKE UP MY MIND ON SOME ISSUES,
BUT ITS PRIMARY BENEFIT WAS THAT ALL OUR
MANAGERS PARTICIPATED IN OUR DECISIONS.
WE MAY NOT HAVE MADE DECISIONS EVERYONE
AGREED WITH. BUT WE MADE DECISIONS
EVERYONE WAS MORE WILLING TO CARRY OUT
BECAUSE THEIR CASE HAD BEEN HEARD.

THAT PROCESS, INCIDENTALLY, HELPED US
ANTICIPATE SOME PROBLEMS WE HAD NOT
ANTICIPATED AND REACH SOME SOLUTIONS WE
HAD NOT CONSIDERED.

THE POSITION OF TEACHERS IS MY

THIRD EXAMPLE.

PRACTICALLY EVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT IN

THE COUNTRY NOW FACES THE QUESTION OF

HOW TO MAINTAIN A HIGH QUALITY

TEACHING STAFF DURING THE NEXT TEN

YEARS. MANY OLDER

TEACHERS ARE NEARING RETIREMENT, AND

MANY OF OUR BEST YOUNG TEACHERS ARE

LOOKING FOR BETTER CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

ELSEWHERE.

AASA

**SALARY IS ONE ISSUE THAT PUSHES TEACHERS
OUT THE DOOR. ANOTHER IS WORKING
ENVIRONMENT, THE SENSE THAT THEY ARE
CAUGHT IN A SITUATION IN WHICH THEIR
TALENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO DEVELOP AND
GROW.**

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THAT'S EXACTLY THE SAME PROBLEM WE HAD WITH MANY OF OUR YOUNGER EMPLOYEES. THEY FELT TIED UP BY RULES, REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES. WHAT THEY NEEDED WAS A WORKING ENVIRONMENT THAT CHALLENGED THEM, AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THEY COULD FEEL EFFECTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE WITHOUT FEELING THAT BIG MANAGER WAS HOVERING OVER THEIR SHOULDER, OR THAT THE COMPANY BUREAUCRACY WAS CONSTANTLY SEARCHING FOR WAYS TO PREVENT THEM FROM DOING SOMETHING.

IN PART, THAT IS WHY WE MOVED TO A
DECENTRALIZED SYSTEM OF MANAGEMENT IN
WHICH MANAGERS AND THEIR TEAM
BECAME CENTERS OF AUTHORITY AND AUTONOMY.
THAT DECISION IN TURN HELPED US PEEL AWAY
LAYERS OF BUREAUCRACY THAT HAD BEEN
INTERVENING TOO FREQUENTLY IN AREAS WHERE
THEIR INTERVENTION, THOUGH HISTORIC, NOW
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WAS UNNECESSARY. IN SHORT, THIS WAS A
DECISION THAT ALLOWED US TO REMOVE A
BUREAUCRACY WHICH MAY HAVE FELT IT HAD A
CAUSE BUT WHICH NO LONGER HAD ANY PURPOSE.

IF I HAD TO SUMMARIZE IN A SINGLE SENTENCE
BOTH THE PHILOSOPHY AND RESULT OF WHAT WE
DID, IT WOULD BE THIS: WE WANTED TO
PROVIDE PEOPLE WHO HAD SOME CONFIDENCE IN
THEIR OWN IDEAS AND THEIR OWN ABILITIES AN
ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THEY WOULD NOT BE
PENALIZED FOR INITIATIVE, AN ENVIRONMENT
IN WHICH THEY WOULD BE JUDGED ACCORDING TO
WHETHER THEY SUCCEEDED OR FAILED.

**NO, THAT IS NOT AN IDEA THAT IS EASILY
TRANSFERRED TO THE WORLD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION.
AS I HAVE NOTED BEFORE, THERE ARE SOME
FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE WORLD
IN WHICH YOU OPERATE AND THE WORLD IN
WHICH I OPERATED.**

**I MAY HAVE HAD TO DEAL WITH MY BOARD OF
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DIRECTORS, BUT I NEVER HAD TO DEAL
SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE SCHOOL BOARD, THE
TEACHERS' UNION, THE PTA, THE NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION, THE CITY COUNCIL, THE MAYOR
AND THE LOCAL EDITORIAL WRITERS.**

I ALSO HAD ANOTHER ADVANTAGE THAT YOU
DON'T HAVE. I COULD PRETTY MUCH HIRE
AND FIRE AT MY OWN DISCRETION. AND IF
I

WANTED TO KNOW IF I MADE THE RIGHT
DECISION, I COULD ALWAYS LOOK AT THE
PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT OR THE PRICE AT
WHICH OUR

COMPANY'S STOCK WAS TRADING. IN
YOUR CASE, THE RESULTS MAY NOT BE
CLEAR FOR MANY YEARS.

MY CONSTITUENCY SIMPLY WANTED TO MAKE
A PROFIT. YOUR CONSTITUENCY IS
FORCED TO TAKE A LOT ON FAITH.

I HAVE TOO MUCH RESPECT FOR THE JOB
YOU DO TO STAND HERE AND RECOMMEND
THAT YOU RUSH HOME AND DECENTRALIZE
YOUR SCHOOL

SYSTEMS BECAUSE THAT IDEA HAPPENED TO
WORK FOR MY COMPANY SEVERAL YEARS AGO.

BUT I WOULD LIKE YOU TO THINK ABOUT WHAT
SAID WITHIN A VERY SPECIFIC CONTEXT.

THAT CONTEXT IS THAT AFTER A PERIOD OF
TIME IN WHICH THE MAJOR LEADERSHIP IN
EDUCATIONAL REFORM CAME FROM THE
STATES, WE ARE NOW

**ENTERING A PERIOD WHEN THERE IS A
GROWING NEED FOR LOCAL LEADERSHIP.**

DESCRIBED LITERALLY CRY OUT FOR THE KIND
OF ASSERTIVE, INDEPENDENT, LOCAL LEVEL
LEADERSHIP THAT SUPERINTENDENTS ARE IN A
POSITION TO PROVIDE AND ARE CAPABLE OF
PROVIDING.

THE ISSUES ARE COMPLEX. THERE IS NO
QUESTION ABOUT THAT. BUT YOU MAY BE
UNIQUELY POSITIONED TO PLAY A LEADERSHIP
ROLE THAT NOBODY ELSE CAN PLAY.

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PLACES TO BEGIN.
SOME ARE PRETTY AMBITIOUS. SOME ARE MORE
MODEST.

A MODEST BEGINNING MIGHT BE TO INITIATE A
SORTING OUT PROCESS IN WHICH SUPERINTENDENTS,
PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS AND PARENTS, PERHAPS
WITH THE HELP OF OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS,
BEGIN TO WORK THROUGH THE ISSUES INVOLVED
IN DEVELOPING A SYSTEM WHICH PLACES MORE
AUTHORITY AND AUTONOMY AT THE LEVEL OF THE
INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL.

IF YOU ARE FEELING MORE AMBITIOUS, THERE IS ALWAYS THE WHOLE SET OF ISSUES REGARDING THE POSITION AND STATUS OF TEACHERS WITHIN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM THAT HAS TO BE ADDRESSED.

I AM NOT CLOSE ENOUGH TO THE ISSUES INVOLVED IN TEACHER/SCHOOL BOARD RELATIONS TO KNOW HOW EACH SIDE NOW VIEWS THEIR RESPECTIVE POSITIONS, AND OF COURSE I KNOW THAT PERSPECTIVE WILL VARY FROM STATE TO STATE AND EVEN DISTRICT TO DISTRICT.

BUT MY. BUSINESS EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT ME
THAT WHEN EXTERNAL CHALLENGES AND PRESSURES
BECOME PARTICULARLY POWERFUL, THE
ADVERSARIAL RELATIONSHIPS THAT OFTEN EXIST
WITHIN INSTITUTIONS BEGIN TO MODERATE, AND
A RAPPROCHEMENT THAT ONCE WAS CONSIDERED
NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE BECOMES A REALITY.

SUCH A SITUATION MAY NOW EXIST IN SOME SCHOOL DISTRICTS REGARDING ISSUES OF DEEP CONCERN TO TEACHERS. IF IT DOES, OR IF THERE IS A POSSIBILITY OF THIS HAPPENING, THEN NOBODY IS BETTER POSITIONED THAN THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS TO WORK WITH THE TEACHERS AND THE SCHOOL BOARDS TO REDUCE AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT AND TO HELP BROKER NEW ATTITUDES THAT CAN LEAD TO SOME EXCITING NEW PROGRAMS.

THERE MAY NOT BE A MORE IMPORTANT ISSUE AT THE PRESENT TIME, BECAUSE IF WE ARE GOING TO HAVE MEANINGFUL CHANGE OR RESTRUCTURING IN OUR SYSTEMS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION, WE MUST HAVE THE PARTICIPATION AND COOPERATION OF TEACHERS AND THEIR ORGANIZATIONS.

ONCE AGAIN, IT'S EASY ENOUGH FOR ME TO
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STAND HERE AND GIVE ADVICE, TO²MEIVYOU_i4, 7ge 'N-7"
SOMETHING IN MY OWN EXPERIENCE THAT MAY BE RELEVANT TO YOU.

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BUT YOU ARE THE ONES ON THE FIRING LINE.
AND AFTER WE ALL LEAVE HERE, I GO BACK TO
MY MANY BUSINESS AND PUBLIC INTERESTS BUT
YOU GO BACK TO THE DIFFICULT JOB OF
RUNNING YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

As I SAID AT THE OUTSET, BEING A SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATOR IS A DEMANDING AND DIFFICULT
JOB. You ARE OVERWHELMED WITH WORK,
PRESSURE AND CRISES. You DON'T GET ENOUGH
CREDIT FOR THE SUCCESSES YOU HAVE, AND YOU
MAY RECEIVE RECEIVE TOO MUCH BLAME FOR
PROBLEMS CREATED BY OTHERS.

NEVERTHELESS, I SINCERELY BELIEVE OUR SCHOOL SYSTEMS
STAND ON THE THRESHOLD OF AN UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITY AND
THAT YOU ARE IN AN UNUSUAL POSITION OF LEADERSHIP.

YES, IT'S TOUGH BEING A SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATOR. BUT THIS MAY BE ONE OF
THOSE RARE TIMES WHEN IT'S ALSO WORTH IT.

THANK YOU AND GOOD LUCK.
