AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL FOR STATE
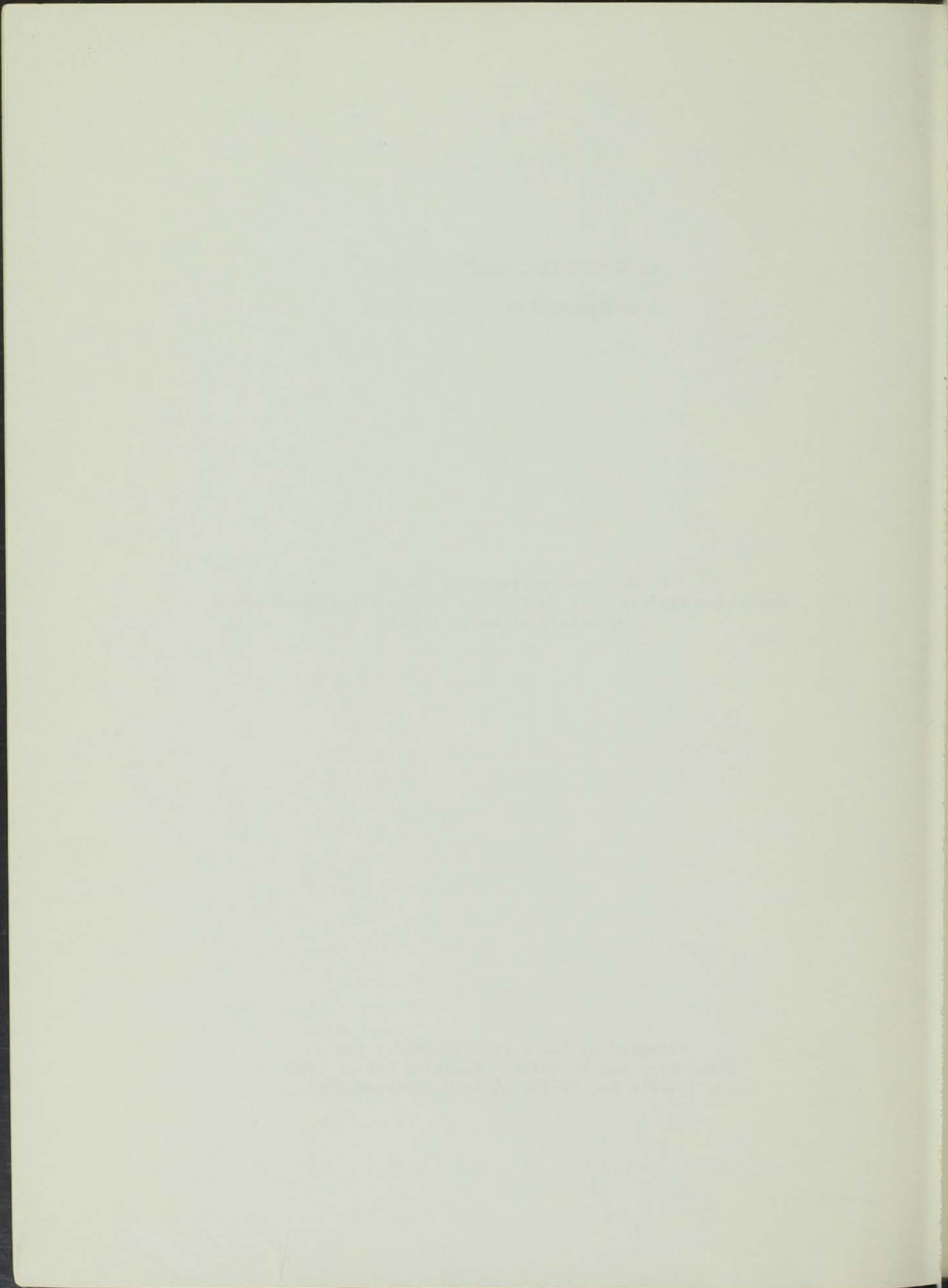
ACCREDITATION OF LOCAL SCHOOLS

State of Iowa
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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A status study on school approval and accreditation
practices was conducted in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska,
North Dakota and South Dakota in 1973. The study showed a
high degree of uniformity among the states with existing
state standards heavily weighted on input measures while
little attention was given to process and product measures.
A suggested model for state approval/accreditation was
developed which incorporated input, process and product
measures into the accreditation process.

To make the suggested model operational, specific
procedures for implementation had to be devised. This
monograph describes a process that may be used by state
education agencies in accrediting local schools.

The model has not been field tested and may require
more time and resources than schools are willing to commit.

The reader should note that although the project was
prepared as part of a grant from the U. S. Office of Education,
the opinions expressed in this guide do not necessarily reflect
the position or policy of the U. S. Office of Education and no
official endorsement by the Office should be inferred.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The 1970's are not a restful period in American education. As
society becomes increasingly fast-paced and complex, people have come
to expect more and more from the schools. Instruction in the basic
skills is no longer enough; schools of today are expected to help solve
the problems of racial tension, drug addiction, decline of the nuclear
family and environmental pollution. And yet, with those increased demands
upon the schools, there is another trend of public reaction, the quest
for accountability. Although faced with shortages, inflation and economic
uncertainty, citizens are being asked for increased financial support of
the schools. In the growing consumerism fashion, they are asking for
evidence of the results of educational spending. They want to know how
increased funding for education may be translated into increased student
learning and skill development, better student attitudes and self concepts.
They want the school to be accountable.

Definitions for accountability abound /see, for example, the discus-
sion by Osborn (1973) or the annotated bibliography prepared by the North
Carolina State Department of Public Instruction (1972)/. Basically,
however, the accountable school seeks to tie educational input, processes
and output together in a system of evaluation to answer questions about
school effectiveness. The idea of relating input, process, and output
in a systematic formulation of school evaluation is fairly recent.
Traditional school approval or accreditation evaluations have focused
largely on input and to a lesser extent on process. Good schools were
presumed to be those which offered more than a minimum number of units,
has sufficient library books, employed certified teachers, and provided

adequate footcandles of lighting in student study areas. Little or no attempt was made to determine whether student performance on the stated (or implied) objectives of the school was satisfactory in terms of norm-referenced or criterion-referenced standards.

Systems of school standards, stated in input terms, are of the kind typically used by state education agencies to fulfill their regulatory requirements of school approval or licensing. Osborn (1973) in a study of state approval and accreditation in six states has outlined a model whereby state agencies could fulfill their leadership function by providing not only approval for schools which meet minimum requirements, but also accreditation for schools which meet the standards of an accountable school. In his model, Osborn describes the approved school as an input-rated school, one which provides sufficient amount of resources for state approval. The accountable or accredited school would be the school that could provide evidence of suitable processes and outputs based upon approved levels of inputs.

The purpose of this monograph is to describe a system which will provide the basis for a state education agency program of school accreditation. The system has been developed within certain parameters to permit its operation in the real world. Thus, in the formulation of the system, allowance has been made for the technical and human constraints which would prevent the implementation of an error-free total accountability model. For example, assuming perfectly reliable and valid measurements (obviously an untenable assumption given the present state of the art), a completely accountable school could present evidence of achievement for each student on each of the school's objectives. From a practical

point of view, the collection of such data, let alone its analysis and interpretation, would present staggering problems for a local school. Fortunately, such procedures are not necessary in order to make inferences about school effectiveness. The system presented in this monograph represents, in the author's opinion, requirements for school accreditation within the reasonable school constraints of time, money, and personnel expertise needed for implementation of the accountability process.

The remainder of this monograph will be presented in two parts. The first part will discuss the assumptions underlying the formulation of this particular accountability system. These assumptions will be presented separately from the implementation procedures to facilitate the reader's judgment of the system. The reader who finds himself in serious disagreement with the assumptions underlying the system would most likely wish not to accept or to seriously modify the system.

The second part of the monograph will outline suggested procedures to be followed by local schools, a state agency and evaluators and independent auditors in the implementation of the accountability system. This section, by its very nature, will be more concrete and specific than the section outlining the assumptions and is designed to help the reader envision the procedures that might take place in certifying a school as accountable.

ASSUMPTIONS OF THE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

Any accountability system, and there are several now available, rests on certain logical assumptions about what accountability means and who should be accountable to whom for what. Accountability is a label for a complex set of abstractions; and, as in other cases in which we use labels as code words for complicated sets of ideas, we may mask our agreements and our disagreements by sticking to the labels and failing to make sure we are talking about the same basic concepts. The purpose of this section of the monograph is to explore the rationale behind some of those basic ideas on which this system of accountability rests. In the development of an accountability system certain judgments are made about what are appropriate procedures to include, how much to rely on outside evaluators, which aspects of school functioning are best included in the system. This section will present those judgments and the reasons behind them.

In the discussion which follows, the term system refers to the accountability system developed in this monograph. The numbered items represent judgments made about desirable features of the system. They are presented in no particular order of chronology or importance and should be considered as they help to define the system as a whole.

1. The system will encourage and facilitate the continuing improvement of a school in areas of identified weakness. The accountability system from the point of view of the local school might look something like Figure 1. Each of the phases in Figure 1 will be discussed in some detail in a later section. The point to be discussed here is the final step, revisions, plans, and presentation to the state.

Figure 1:   Diagram of the Accountability Process

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                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │ Initiation of the│
                    │   Application   │
                    └─────────────────┘
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        ┌────────────────────┼────────────────────┐
        │                                          │
┌───────────────┐                          ┌─────────────────┐
│ Statement     │                          │                 │
│ and Study     │                          │ Needs Assessment│
│ of School     │                          │                 │
│ Philosophy    │                          └─────────────────┘
└───────────────┘                                  │
        └────────────────────┬────────────────────┘
                             │
                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │   Curriculum    │
                    │    Revision     │
                    └─────────────────┘
                             │
                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │   Team Visit    │
                    │    and Audit    │
                    │     Report      │
                    └─────────────────┘
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                    │ Revisions, plans│
                    │ and Presentation│
                    │   to the state  │
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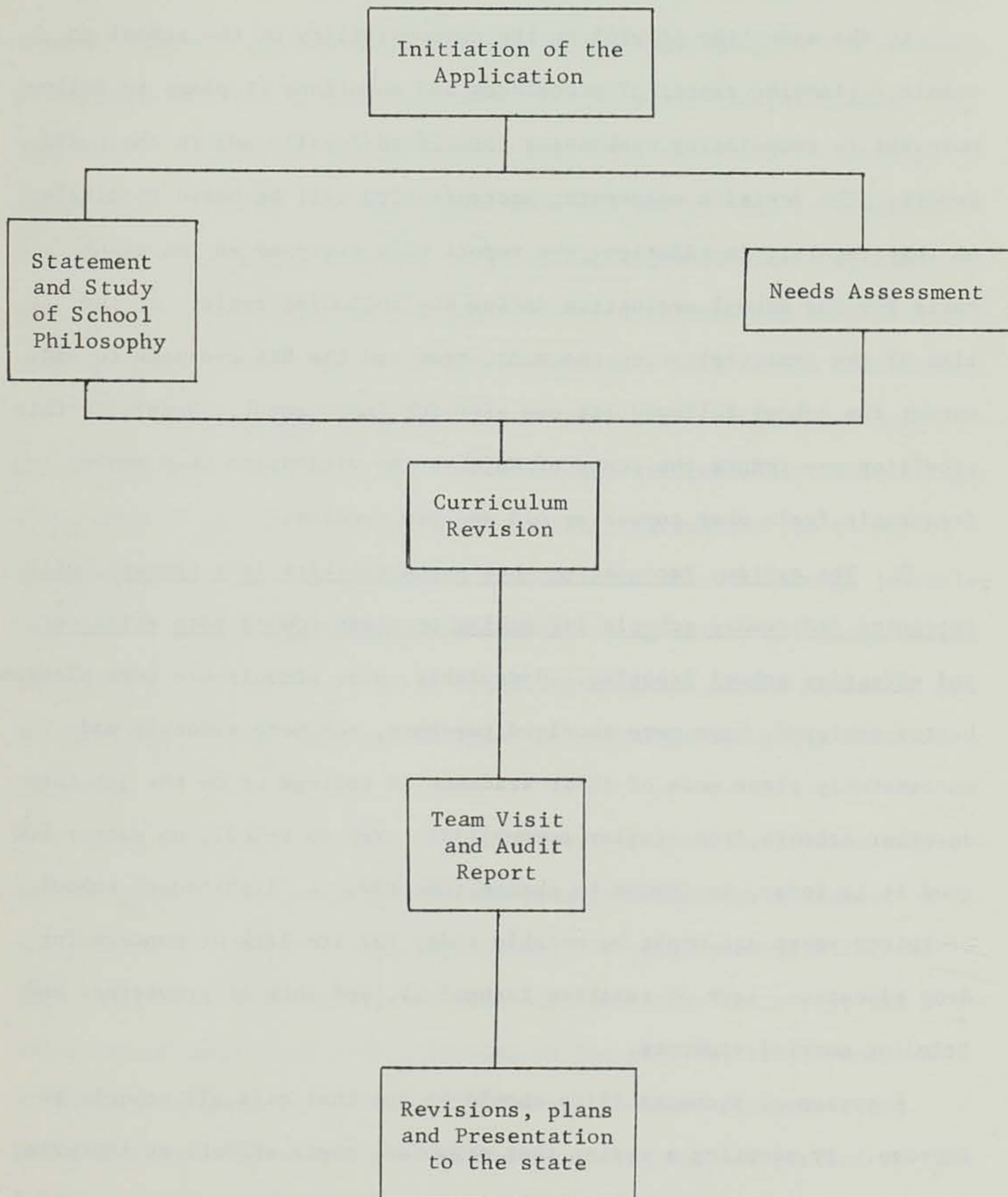
After the visiting audit team has submitted its written report to the
school and to the SEA about the results of its findings, the school will
have the opportunity to reply to the SEA about any aspect of the audit
team reports it feels is inaccurate or misleading.

At the same time it will be the responsibility of the school to
submit a planning report of procedures and solutions it plans to follow
pursuant to remediating weaknesses identified locally and in the audit
report. The decision concerning accreditation will be based partially
on this report. In addition, the report will serve as an important
basis for the school evaluation during the following cycle. At the
time of the next visitation the audit team and the SEA can note to what
extent the school followed its own plan for improvement. Hopefully this
provision may reduce the sense of déjà vu the visitation team member
frequently feels when comparing old and new reports.

2. The system, recognizing that accountability is a process, will
recognize and reward schools for making progress toward more efficient
and effective school learning. Undeniably, some schools are more pleasant,
better equipped, have more involved teachers, run more smoothly and
successfully place more of their students in college or on the job than
do other schools from similar communities. Yet no school, no matter how
good it is today, is immune to change tomorrow. A "lighthouse" school
of thirty years ago might be notable today for its lack of concern for
drug education, lack of teaching technology, and lack of provisions and
help for married students.

A system of accountability should be one that aids all schools to
improve. By adopting a system that organizes their efforts at improving
their total program, any school should be able to make progress toward a
more efficient and effective operation reflecting the needs and desires
of the community it serves.

3. <u>The system will encourage educators and schools to make
decisions based upon the best information available</u>. This condition
of the model has been included with a view toward two unfortunate
though related conditions common in schools today. On the one hand the
school routinely gathers great amounts of information about its students.
Attendance records, biographical data, test scores, extracurricular
interests, and health information are routinely available on students
in every grade level. On the other hand, the use of this information
for educational decision making is often haphazard at best. Granted
that there are many possible wrong ways to use information such as stan-
dardized test scores, this does not excuse their lack of use altogether.

In a similar vein, decisions about curriculum modification are
often made with the aid of only the scantiest information. Considering
the number of narrative examples of current programs and the number of
research and evaluation articles in education available through journals,
ERIC, Dissertation Abstracts, state education agencies, R & D centers,
and professional meetings, it is appalling to think of the number of
curriculum decisions made on the basis of consultation with a textbook
salesman.

Schools which would seek to become certified as accountable should
follow decision making patterns which promote a thorough statement of
the problem at hand including population, history, and causal informa-
tion; knowledge from disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and
child development which have a bearing on the problem; limits and con-
straints on a possible solution imposed by the local situation; and
consideration of alternative solutions including but not limited to
those tried in similar situations by other communities along with the

advantages and disadvantages of each alternative. These practices are
at the heart of good decision making and of good schools.

4. <u>The basic unit of the accountability system will be the
attendance center</u>. This condition recognizes that the coordination
and planning of accountability becomes most critical at the building
level where educators work together on a daily basis to meet the needs
of their students. The system recognizes the importance of provisions
for vertical and horizontal curriculum planning and the need for admin-
istrative organization at the district level. However, a system which
allows individual attendance centers to be certified as accountable
gives explicit recognition to the importance of team work by educators
who work together on a daily basis and to the desirability of allowing
individual schools to pursue areas of particular need or interest in
their own community.

5. <u>Although based on an input - process - output evaluation model,
the system will recognize that certain input and process conditions are
considered to have inherent value regardless of the extent to which it
may be demonstrated that they lead to desirable output</u>. The basis of
the accountability system described in this monograph is the idea of
viewing the inputs, processes and outputs of schooling as a system
designed to facilitate the achievement of worthwhile learner goals.
For example, suppose that a school has selected as one of its important
student goals: Engages in voluntary reading of books and magazines.
In an effort to improve student performance on this particular goal,
the school buys attractive, high-interest level books and magazines
suitable for its student population. The books and magazines are arranged
attractively in the library and instruction is provided on using library

resources. Student schedules are arranged so that students have easy

access to the library in their spare time. The amount of voluntary

reading is monitored before, during and after implementation program

by check-out and theft rates in the library, anonymous student question-

naires and independently conducted interviews of a random sample of

students. The evaluation paradigm might look something like this:

INPUT	PROCESS	PRODUCT
-new books and magazines	-instruction on library use	-amount of voluntary student reading of
-attractive displays and posters	-allowing students to schedule themselves to library in free time	books and magazines measured by check-out and theft rate, questionnaires, and interviews

The above is a reasonable tidy example of relating input, process and

product. Measurement over time would provide the school with some idea

of the effectiveness of its efforts in promoting voluntary reading among

students.

Although the above example does not provide perfect evidence of goal

attainment, compared to many problems in educational evaluation, this

particular problem offers a rather clear-cut design. In many aspects

of school endeavor, little or no evidence of cause and effect may be

inferred between input, process and product. The Coleman report and

writings by Jencks offer some evidence that many of the inputs such as

new buildings, better texts, more educated teachers produce little effect

on children's school learning as traditionally measured. But just because

large scale research has not tied increased school learnings to the aes-

thetic qualities of the building, for example, it does not necessarily

follow that a district would want to forego the consideration of a pleasing

atmosphere in which to learn. Beyond considerations of sufficient heat,

light and safety features, a community may decide that it is important

to provide aesthetically pleasing surroundings for its school children regardless of how or whether an evaluator may be able to relate this input to any desirable outcome.

The above argument is not meant to be made at the expense of the concept of relating input, process and product. In controlled situations, psychologists may offer evidence that people learn faster, are more relaxed and have better attitudes toward their tasks when they are in pleasant rather than sterile or offensive atmospheres. However, it may not be necessary (or possible) to prove the same is true at Howard Street Elementary School. Interpersonal regard between teachers and learners, open-ended questioning, and allowing children to pick elective courses in the eighth grade may be other examples of inputs or processes which the school may view as desirable but which it cannot tie directly to a specified educational outcome.

6. The system will allow wide latitude in the statement and selection of school goals and measures by individual schools. An accountability model which provides that the individual school shall be responsible for its own statement of educational goals has the advantage of making the goal statements seem more relevant to the parents, educators and students who adapted them. Focusing on the meaning and implication of their goal statements should tend to increase the importance of the vital planning phase; goal selection becomes a task for the school participants, not another list of requirements handed down by the state. States which have adopted a general set of statewide educational goals may wish to specify that individual schools relate each of their goals to one or more of the statewide goals. However, a set of five to fifteen goals such as a state might adopt would probably not provide sufficient focus for a school accountability program.

Similarly, beyond any minimal requirements of statewide testing in the basic skill areas, selection of test instruments should be left to the discretion of the school. Except in cases of statewide testing or when schools voluntarily enter into programs of parallel testing in an effort to measure school or teacher effect, placing the responsibility for test selection on the local school should have the advantage of decreasing the all-too-common pleas that the test didn't measure the school's objectives. One may even hope that, realizing that there are indeed many objectives not validly measured by standardized tests, schools may turn to greater use of unobtrusive measures and the demand for better instruments in some areas now notably lacking may improve.

7. The system will provide for a logical check on the extent to which the school philosophy and goals are reflected in its daily practices. For a school to be accountable means in part that it is held responsible for doing those things it says it is going to do. For a basic statement of the intents of the school, one might turn to the statement of the school philosophy and general goals. Such statements are typically the result of many hours of labor on the part of a committee appointed specifically for the purpose of writing a philosophy of the school and five or ten general goals to accompany it. Typically the results of their efforts are ceremoniously adopted by the school board and promptly filed, task completed. But the accountable school is not the typical school. In a school certified as accountable, one should expect to find the intents stated in the school philosophy reflected in its day-to-day activities. A possible procedure for judging the congruence of intent and practice will be described below.

A school seeking to be certified as accountable will submit a statement of its philosophy and/or general school goals to an outside

auditor, independent of the district and of the state education agency.

The auditor will analyze the school philosophy, breaking it into component

parts and providing statements of possible positive and, if he wishes,

negative evidence that the school intent is being realized. For example,

if a school stated in its philosophy that it believed in individualized

instruction, a visitor to that school might expect to see a variety of

instructional resources available and in use; students working on different

tasks; provision made for alternate ways to achieve the same objective;

teachers who could display considerable knowledge about the aptitude,

interests, achievement and personality of individual pupils. (This list,

of course, could be greatly expanded.)

Simultaneous with the auditor's list of expectations, the school

would submit a report explicating under each component of the philosophy

the school practices which reflected the intent of the philosophy and

which were in actual practice in the school. The report would be completed

by each department, or each teaching team or each grade level depending

on the organizational structure of the school. A building report reflecting

the general administrative practices as they reflect the school philosophy

would also be included.

The auditor would then receive the school report and compare it to

his own. Based on his comparison of what he would expect to find and

what the school lists as actual practices, the auditor would prepare a

series of recommendations to the visiting team. For example, the district

may include the concept of individualization in its school philosophy

but make no mention of flexible grouping, a concept the auditor feels

is central to individualization. The auditor may also suggest classroom

processes to observe in action. Do teachers speak to individual children

rather than to the class as a total group? Do teachers modify their

messages depending on the level of understanding of the pupil? The

visiting team would issue a report based on school practices, expecta-

tions of the auditor, and their on-site observations.

8. The system will recognize that personnel within a school who

are to be held accountable for certain school processes and outcomes

must be given appropriate decision-making authority in those areas.

A common and central requirement of accountability procedures is that

they tie decisions about educational expenditure to measured amounts of

educational output. The degree to which a professional staff may be

accountable is in proportion to the extent to which they may participate

in budgetary decision making. Given the amount of dollars available for

a given school, the teachers should be involved in decisions on how to

allocate the money for salaries (professional, paraprofessional, and

clerical), instructional materials, and inservice activities.

Where teachers work in groups or teams on accountability procedures

they should be involved in interviewing new staff members to insure

compatability of personalities and educational philosophies and comple-

mentary instructional skills among teams and among the staff as a whole.

Similarly, principals who are held accountable for public relations

with the local community should be provided with the freedom and re-

sources to develop communication and involvement programs suitable to

their particular local conditions. And students who are to be held

accountable for the attainment of educational objectives should have

some voice (appropriate to their age and responsibility) in the selection

of those objectives and/or the means by which they will be attained.

9. The state education agency shall provide sufficient support personnel and resources to aid schools seeking to become certified as accountable. The procedure for accountability certification outlined in this monograph involves many planning and evaluation processes that not even most of the best schools customarily apply to their total program. The final certification of a school as accountable will come only after months of extra work on the part of the staff. Many of the planning, programming and evaluation activities in which teachers and administrators will engage will be unfamiliar at the outset of the procedure. And as with any system of evaluation or accountability there is the potential that many of the activities may appear threatening to the staff and that much of the information gathered may be misused.

It is the responsibility of the state education agency to provide inservice training to personnel from each school that seeks certification as an accountable school. Workshops using small group problem solving techniques and simulation activities as well as large group instruction can be used to familiarize teachers, administrators, and lay citizen representatives with the procedures to be followed in school certification. An overview of the procedures, a working knowledge of the forms to be used and types of data to be collected can be used to make the accountability procedure a less threatening and more positive experience for all concerned.

Beyond providing inservice training in the methods and procedures of accountability certification, the state agency will also provide a staff liaison person with whom the school will maintain contact during the time it seeks to become and does remain certified. The liaison person shall facilitate the local school's efforts to become certified by making

available lists of resource persons in curriculum development and evalua-
tion, conducting, arranging for or helping the school arrange for addi-
tional inservice as needed and helping the school present to the state
its case for certification.

ROLE DEFINITIONS

The certification of a school as accountable is a complex process involving numerous persons from various educational agencies and from the lay public. Throughout the certification process, personnel from the different groups will be called upon to work together in many diverse tasks. In order that their work may proceed as smoothly as possible, the following role definitions are offered to clarify the skills and behaviors each group may expect from the others.

I. <u>State Education Agency</u>: The State Education Agency (SEA) is the certification body in the accountability process. It is the responsibility of the SEA to coordinate the development of accountability procedures and standards, to make such procedures and standards known to local schools, and to coordinate and make available materials and resources helpful to local schools seeking certification.

A. <u>Coordinating Council</u>: Before the accountability procedure is made operational in a state, the SEA shall be responsible for the selection of a coordinating council. The council should consist of approximately from seven to fifteen members and shall include administrators, teachers, pupil personnel service workers, and lay citizens. Students, members of state education boards, professors and representatives of other designated groups may be included. In large or populous states, it may be desirable to have two or more regional councils. The SEA director of accountability shall serve as a presiding official whose voting privileges shall be restricted to the breaking of ties.

It shall be the function of the coordinating council to approve requests by the local schools for a variance from the prescribed procedure, to approve evolutionary changes in state accountability certification procedures, and to approve or disapprove local school applications

for certification as accountable. Each state shall be responsible for developing operations procedures for the coordinating council. Such procedures shall include but need not be limited to specification of the number of members, method of selection, length of term, specified groups to be represented, frequency of meeting, quorum requirements, and the range and limitations of authority of the board. The SEA shall also provide the coordinating council the necessary technical assistance needed for their informed and efficient operation.

B. Professional assistance: The State Education Agency shall be responsible for providing the local schools with designated aspects of professional and technical assistance necessary to facilitate their application. In the initial stages of its application, the school may expect to receive from the SEA (or its designated representative) a two-day workshop for teachers, administrators and lay citizens presenting them with an overview of the procedure they will follow if they pursue their application for certification. In addition, the SEA shall maintain and make available upon request sets of goals and objectives from various sources including previously certified schools; technical test information generated by applicant schools; annotated bibliographies of accountability procedures, test selection procedures, and models for objective writing. The SEA shall also serve as a clearinghouse for evaluators, auditors and consultants whose services may be desired by local schools.

C. Liaison personnel: The State Education Agency will designate for each school a staff liaison person in the agency who will facilitate the school's dealings with the SEA and with the coordinating council. It is the responsibility of the liaison person to aid the school in finding consultants, evaluators, and assessment materials; in planning community

involvement; in structuring in-service activities; and in preparing the necessary reports for SEA certification. The SEA liaison for a particular school will work with the school throughout the accountability cycle.

II. Local School: The local school attendance center is the unit of application for certification. While the services, organization and expertise of the central office staff may be invaluable to the school in its functioning, this model recognizes the wide variety of local schools that may operate in a single district and therefore has chosen the local attendance center as the unit of application.

A. Central Administration and School Board: The application by a local school for certification as accountable must be recommended by the superintendent and approved by the local board. In addition to giving their approval to pursuing the great amount of work involved in the certification procedures, it is expected that approval also provides for allocation of resources and personnel in the operation of an accountable school. That is, the application by a school staff for certification as accountable demonstrates a willingness to assume responsibility for their professional decisions. Approval by the administration and the school board should imply the freedom to make appropriate professional decisions. The school staff should be provided with the time needed for implementing the accountability model. Extended contracts, released time or other scheduling adjustments may be appropriate depending on the local situation.

B. Steering Committee: The Steering Committee will provide coordination and direction to the school's application activities. The committee membership will include the principal, teacher representatives, student representatives (required at the high school level, optional at other levels), parent and community representatives (at least 25% of the committee's total membership) and representation of the pupil personnel staff. The

selection of the teacher representatives will vary with the organizational

pattern of the school. For example, in elementary schools organized into

self-contained classrooms by grade level, representatives may include

one teacher from each grade level. In a nongraded elementary school

organized into houses or pods, representatives may be selected from

each pod. Regardless of school organization, the school should strive

to include one or more representatives from each of the major goal area

committees (e.g., language arts, mathematics, vocational skills). The

Steering Committee will meet on a regular basis. It is the responsibility

of the members to keep the committee as a whole informed of the progress

of the goal area committees. An agenda of the Steering Committee should

be announced at least twenty-four (24) hours before each meeting and

written minutes should be distributed to all members of the professional

staff. Steering Committee members should receive released time to

compensate for their extra responsibility.

C. Building Level Administration: The application for certification

as an accountable school originates with an individual school. The

principal of that school is the coordinator of the application procedure.

He is expected to organize and facilitate the school's application activ-

ities, and to provide time, facilities and access to outside expertise

needed by his staff in the application procedure. As is implied by the

concept of accountability, he is expected to permit his staff the freedom

to make decisions in areas for which they share major responsibility for

the outcomes. The primary contact of the State Education Agency, the

evaluator and the auditor will be made with the principal. Finally,

the principal shall be responsible for providing relevant feedback to

the central administration and to the school board.

D. <u>Teachers</u>: The accountability model recognizes the central importance of teachers in the school's instructional program. The involvement of teachers in the certification procedure is, therefore, central. For purposes of completing the application, all teachers should serve on one or more committees having a designated area of responsibility. For coordination purposes, such committees should have overlapping memberships, and a member of the Steering Committee should serve on each committee.

A large burden of responsible decision-making is shared by the teachers in this accountability mode. In order for the decision-making to contribute effectively to quality education, it is the responsibility of the teachers to be informed about the model, to maintain continued involvement in the process and to make decisions based on the best available information.

E. <u>Pupil Personnel Staff</u>: The Pupil Personnel Staff of the school includes all professionals other than teachers and administrators. It is expected that such staff can serve as a valuable component in the school's application. Counselors, social workers and nurses, for example, have considerable expertise in the areas of group and individual assessment of students. Much of the information needed by the school about its student body will already be available through the pupil personnel staff. It is hoped that one benefit of the school's accountability application would be an increased awareness of this information and an accompanying increase in the use of such information in planning the educational experiences of the students.

F. <u>Parents and Lay Citizens</u>: The very notion of accountability implies that a school will be accountable <u>to</u> someone. That someone is

to a very large degree the parents who send their children to the school and the citizens whose taxes support it.

The accountability model outlined in this document does not include detailed lists of goals that the schools shall seek to attain nor courses that the school shall offer. Nor does it establish standards of suitable pupil performance. The model recognizes that among schools, indeed among the best schools, the goals, course offerings and desired levels of pupil performance will vary according to the nature of the community and the makeup of the student body. In these matters then, the school shall be accountable not primarily to the state but to the community which supports it and which it serves.

Parent and community involvement is therefore an essential part of this model. The school will solicit and secure involvement of parents and citizens by: 1) inviting parent and citizen participation in the process through letters and announcements in the media; 2) including parents and citizens as at least 25% of the membership of the Steering Committee; 3) providing opportunities for additional numbers of parents and citizens to participate in determining the school philosophy, determining the importance of school goals and setting levels of desired student performance; 4) reporting at announced public meetings and through other suitable channels on a regular interim basis the progress of the school in its application.

G. Students: The degree of student involvement is dependent to a large degree on the age of the students served by the school. At the high school level it is important to include at least a representative sample of students in the needs assessment activities and to provide for student representation on the Steering Committee. Students should also

provide input into the school's statement of philosophy and may participate in other activities that the school feels are appropriate.

In junior high or middle schools, participation may vary with older students having more responsibility. Even in elementary schools it would be desirable to keep students informed of the process since it so directly concerns them. Elementary schools may want to make use of "recent graduates" in place of students in activities such as the needs assessment.

III. Evaluator and Auditor:

The evaluator and auditor serve complementary roles in the accreditation procedure. Basically the role of the evaluator is to lend technical expertise to the school's evaluation of its program. The evaluator serves the school in such matters as writing goals and objectives, sampling techniques, selection and administration of tests and other assessment instruments, analysis and interpretation of data and the strategies for the use of such information. In addition, the evaluator is responsible for preparing reports for the SEA as required by the accountability procedure; he provides narrative summaries of procedures used by the school in sampling, test administration, determining school needs and other critical steps in the application procedure. Depending on the personnel resources of the school, the evaluator may be a regular employee of the school system or he may be retained on a consultant basis.

The role of the auditor is essentially to bring another point of view to the process by providing a critique of the procedures outlined by the evaluator and carried out by the school. The primary duty of the auditor is to provide the school, the evaluator and the SEA with written comments concerning matters such as adequacy of samples, selection of assessment techniques, conditions of test administration, and the accuracy

and appropriateness of data analyses. The auditor functions as an outside
check on the procedure; under no circumstances should he be a regular
employee of the school district. Where the school does have access to
an evaluator in the school system with the technical expertise necessary
to perform the functions outlined, considerable savings in time (to become
familiar with school procedures and data) and money (consultant fees) may
be realized.

It is expected that in most instances the evaluator will not be a
regular employee of the school or district. This assumption is made
in recognition of the fact that many schools do not employ personnel
with both the expertise and time to give to such an undertaking. In
addition, the school may expect certain benefits from the objectivity
of an evaluator coming from outside the system who has helped other
schools complete the procedure and therefore can bring valuable first-
hand experience to the school. In instances where the evaluator is a
regular employee of the school district, the auditor shall be expected
to assume a more active role in monitoring activities such as sampling,
administration and scoring of tests, and data analysis and interpretation.
Schools desiring to use an internal evaluator should present to the SEA
at the time of their initial application a document outlining the auditor's
plan to monitor the evaluation activities.

For schools using the services of an external evaluator, the role
of the auditor may be essentially a written reaction and critique to
documents produced in the application procedure and some substantial
involvement during the team visit. Whether the evaluator is internal
or external to the system, it is the responsibility of the school to
keep the auditor informed in advance of major application activities.

The auditor should have full access to materials and data produced by
the school as part of its evaluation. In addition, it is expected that
as part of his activities the auditor will want to interview a selected
number of administrators, teachers, parents and students. At his
discretion, he may attend meetings, monitor test administration, rescore
a sample of the tests and/or provide additional analyses of the data.
At the option of the school and the evaluator and upon prior arrangement,
he may make comments before the fact about proposed procedures, instruments,
analyses and the like. The above named activities would generally be
conducted when the auditor is serving a school using an internal evaluator.
It should be mentioned, however, that any or all of the activities may
be pursued by an auditor serving a school employing an external evaluator.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROCEDURE

The following sections of this monograph will outline the various steps to be followed by a local school, the state education agency, the evaluator and the auditor in the process of certifying a school as accountable. This overview section will provide a brief description of each step to serve as a kind of advance organizer for the reader.

Initiation of the Application. Because it may take several years for a school to complete one cycle of the certification procedure and because commitment to the application implies a willingness to spend time, money, and, most of all, effort over a relatively long period of time, it is essential that the school staff and others who will be directly involved understand the nature of that commitment at the outset. Therefore, the initial step will involve the school staff in an intensive workshop with SEA personnel, an evaluator, an auditor and staff from other schools involved in the accountability process. The purpose of this workshop is for the local staff to familiarize themselves with the procedure: what they will be expected to do, the rewards, the frustrations, and the help they will be given.

Following the workshop, the staff may want to visit schools already involved in the process and then debate the pros and cons of their own involvement. Acceptance by the state of the initiation of a local school application for certification is contingent upon support by the faculty, acceptance by the school committee and assurances given by the school administration that resource commitments will be made to the procedure.

Statement of Philosophy. Once the application is underway, an evaluator and an auditor have been selected and school committees formed, the next step is the statement of the school philosophy. Written with

input from parents, citizens, students, teachers and administrators, the
school philosophy is a statement of the basic beliefs upon which the
school strives to organize itself. The statement, which will be accepted
by community and faculty groups before being adopted, will be specific
enough to give meaningful focus to the operating procedures of the school.

After the philosophy has been written and accepted by the school
and community, it should be restated in terms of expected school practices.
Analysis should be made of each component of the philosophy and some
possible kinds of evidence listed that one might look for in a school
to see whether that component of the philosophy was currently part of
the school's everyday operations. For example, if a school philosophy
stated that "students should be provided with a wide variety of meaningful
extracurricular activities," one might suggest that the implementation
of this part of the school philosophy could be studied by looking at the
range of extracurricular activities, how many students participated in
each activity, participation rates of various activities over several
years, and studies of student interest in kinds of activities not now
available. A study of whether school facilities were available to many
students or restricted to a few such as members of varsity teams might
also be made. Allocation of school finances to various activities could
be included as a part of the study.

After compilation of the reviewer's suggestions, the school staff
would study each component to determine its degree of implementation into
the school program. Aspects not suggested by the evaluator could be
included as part of this study. The school staff study would be one
basis of the plan for curriculum revision.

Needs Assessment. The next phase of the application is a needs
assessment. This step need not wait until completion of the philosophy

study, but it may be wise not to begin until after the philosophy is written. The purpose of a needs assessment is to determine the areas of student performance, knowledge or attitude which are judged to be most crucial in terms of meeting school goals. The first step in a needs assessment is to compile a complete set of school goals stated in terms of what learners should do as a result of their schooling. The next step is to determine which of those goals represent areas of basic skills, such as reading, in which students need to have attained a certain mastery level in order to be able to succeed with other school learnings. The third step is to involve school staff, students, parents and community members in determining which of the remaining goal areas are most important. For the goals in the basic skill areas and certain other goals, assessment instruments will be selected and a criterion level will be established. The criterion level will represent the minimum acceptable performance on the assessment instrument. When student performance on important goal areas falls below the criterion level, curriculum changes may be in order.

Curriculum Revision. Upon completion of the philosophy implementation study and the needs assessment, the school has gathered considerable evidence as to the areas in which it is functioning at a desired level and the areas where it is not meeting its own levels of expectation. In the curriculum revision section of the application, the school staff studies the areas most in need of change and plans and implements curriculum modifications that will bring the school closer to the desired level. Curriculum modifications are based on a careful examination of data from the philosophy implementation study, understanding of how children learn, current research in the area, advice of consultants and

a study of what other schools are currently doing. Proposed curriculum changes may be large or small in scope and will be reviewed by the school steering committee before being adopted. A plan for evaluating the success of each revision will be included as part of the proposed modification.

Team Visit. The team visit is planned by the auditor, the evaluator and the liaison staff member from the state education agency. The plan for the visit may vary from school to school but is organized to provide an audit of the procedures conducted to date and to bring a fresh point of view to the situation. In states where a team visit is a part of the regular school approval procedure, a team visit may serve the accountability function and the regular school approval. The plan for the team visit will be presented to the school staff for their review and suggestions.

In addition to auditing previously conducted steps of the procedure, team members will focus on the degree of professional responsibility of the staff, opportunities and rewards for professional growth and evidence of wide community and staff involvement in the accountability procedure. At the conclusion of the visit, team members will submit a report to the state presenting their findings within the plan outlined for the visitation. The local school will receive a copy of this report and may reply in writing to the auditor and to the state about any portion the staff feels is unfair or misleading.

As a final step in the team visitation, the school will prepare a report summarizing plans the staff has projected in terms of assessment, curriculum revision, skill development or any other significant change planned in light of current status versus desired status.

Presentation to the State. The final step in the certification procedure involves reporting the findings of the visiting team to the

State Coordinating Council. In arriving at a decision, the state council may wish to consider additional written documents and provide for hearings from the school staff, the evaluator and the auditor. The time and location of the presentation will be announced in advance in the local community so there will be an opportunity for any minority reports representing views of parents or citizens not satisfied with the school's efforts toward becoming accountable to be heard.

The decision of the coordinating council will be based upon the degree to which the school followed specified procedures in defining its philosophy and goals and refining its operational procedures to be more consistent with its beliefs; the degree to which the school encouraged and accepted community involvement in developing its accountability procedures, and the responsibility, resources, and training provided the staff to further their own accountability.

Upon approval by the state coordinating council, the school will be certified as accountable. Because assessment, planning and change are continuous in an accountable school, the cycle again starts and in order to retain its accountability certification, the school must review its Statement of Philosophy and complete the remaining steps required in the cycle.

The above paragraphs have provided an introduction to the procedures followed by a school in becoming certified as accountable. The next sections will outline each step in more detail.

Suggested Time Line for Accountability Certification

Pre-accountability
Certification Activities

Initiation   Implementation
of the   of School
Application   Philosophy
                    Study

    School
    Philosophy   School Goals   School
    Written   Compiled and   Assessment
                    Rated by   Data
                    Importance   Gathered

                                      Curriculum   Curriculum
                                      Planning Based   Revisions
                                      on Philosophy   Implemented
                                      Study and Needs
                                      Assessment

                                                         Team Visit,
                                                         Audit Report
                                                         School Reply

                                                                            Presentation
                                                                            to the SEA
                                                                            and Final
                                                                            Certification

Year	1		2		3		4	
Semester	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2

INITIATION OF THE APPLICATION

The decision on the part of a school staff to seek certification as an accountable school should be based on a great deal of prior information. Because of the long term commitment inherent in the application (completion of one cycle may take four years), and because of the significant demands made upon the staff in each phase of the application, it is imperative that the staff be fully informed of the commitments and responsibilities at the outset of the process.

Likewise, it is necessary that the procedure be undertaken in an atmosphere conducive to change and improvement rather than in a threatening atmosphere that encourages entrenchment and the defense of present practices. As discussed in the previous section, the accountable school is not necessarily the school with the greatest per pupil budget or the highest pupil achievement in standardized tests. The accountable school is the school with the staff interested in examining and improving its own effectiveness; in making constructive, planned changes; and in assessing the effectiveness of those changes. The accountable school encourages staff development and provides its staff with the time, facilities, training and decision-making authority needed to examine and improve their effectiveness as professional educators.

Desire for and commitment to continuing change and improvement, a non-threatening atmosphere in which to operate, delegation of authority to those most closely affected by the decision: these conditions may well be the essential prerequisites of an accountable school. Without these conditions, the prognosis for success in seeking certification as an accountable school is slim indeed.

A school that is interested in becoming certified should begin by contacting its state education agency. The SEA liaison person will

arrange a meeting with the entire school faculty to provide an overview of the application procedure; to familiarize the staff with its responsibilities in the procedure and the types of assistance to be provided from SEA consultants and liaison personnel, from the evaluator, auditor and the visitation team. The information provided by the SEA liaison staff member should provide the school staff with a clear idea of what to expect. The outline and approximate time requirements in Table 1 present a possible format to be used in providing the school staff with a comprehensive overview of the application process. The proposed schedule represents a suggested format for such a presentation. While specific formats may vary, some desirable elements include: sufficient length of presentation to enable the staff to understand the process of certification; opportunity for participation in simulation activities; introduction to the roles of SEA liaison, the evaluator and the auditor; ample time for questions from the staff; and an opportunity for the staff to visit with professionals from other schools involved in the certification process.

Schools considering initiating an application may want to visit schools in other states further along in the process and talk at some length with their staffs. Their experiences, both positive and negative, may provide valuable help to schools considering the process.

After the staff has become sufficiently knowledgeable about the certification procedure and has had opportunity to openly discuss the positive and negative aspects of application, the staff should determine whether or not they wish to become involved in the application procedure.

The question may arise as to what constitutes a sufficient majority for the school to pursue accountability certification. Certainly a simple majority is not enough. Given the demands made on the staff

during the process (hopefully balanced by the rewards) and the sheer
length of the process if nearly half the staff opposed the project at
the outset, the chances for success would be virtually nil. At this
point, it may be a good idea to remember that the model presented in
this monograph assumes that a school applying for certification by the
state as an accountable school has already been granted the status of
a school approved as having sufficient inputs. While nearly all schools
in a state may be judged input-approved, it may not at this point be
reasonable to assume that more than a fraction of the schools would
become certified as accountable. The accountable school will be that
school distinguished from other schools not by the quality of its inputs
(smart students, new buildings) but by the professional enthusiasm,
commitment and responsibility of its staff.

It is suggested that 80 percent of the staff indicate support for
accountability certification before a school commits to the accountability
process. It is strongly recommended that whenever possible those teachers
not in favor be offered without prejudice an alternate assignment in the
district. Approval and support of the superintendent and of the school
board should also be given at this time. The sample letter appearing
on the next page shows the kinds of assurances the school may give the
SEA. Upon receipt of such a letter, the SEA coordinating council may
vote to accept the application of the school. Upon acceptance of the
application, official assignment of an SEA liaison person may be made
and the school may begin contracting with an evaluator and an auditor,
outlining a schedule, selecting a steering committee and planning for
the accomplishment of the various activities in the application procedure.

May 3, 197___

Dear Superintendent Rowley:

The purpose of this letter is to submit the application of George Washington Elementary School in the Greenview School District for certification by the state as an accountable school. As you are aware, Washington School has been input approved since the initial state visit in 1958.

Our staff became interested in the accountability approval process after hearing a presentation at last year's Educational Fair in Haverford. This fall a committee of teachers was organized to investigate the process. On February 26, Mary Williams of the SEA liaison staff coordinated a day long in-service presentation which was attended by all professional and paraprofessional staff. Since that time twenty of the professional staff have had an opportunity to visit a school already involved in the certification procedure.

Two faculty meetings were devoted to the discussion of pros and cons involving pursuing the application. Ms. Williams attended one of those sessions as a resource person. On April 3, 197___, the staff voted by secret ballot to pursue the application procedure. The vote was 35 to 4. Two of the four teachers voting no had already indicated they would not be returning to teaching next year. The other two were offered and have accepted teaching positions in other buildings. The district personnel director has assured us we may interview potential replacements for these teachers to insure their interest in the application.

Our plans were presented to the school board on April 16 and they unanimously voted their support. The district curriculum director and evaluation specialist have offered their assistance. We also have approval to provide teachers the equivalent of 15 days of in-service for the next school year.

The staff is quite excited about this opportunity for professional growth and we are looking forward to hearing from you regarding our application.

Sincerely,

_____
Jane Allen
Accreditation Committee
Chairman, Faculty, George Washington
School

Harry Roberts
Principal, George Washington School

_____
John Williams
Superintendent
Greenview School District

Melodie Snider
President
Greenview School Board

Table 1

Outline of a Presentation of the
Certification Process to a School Staff

Approximate time requirements	Topic/Activity	Presented by:
30 minutes	1. Advance organizer: Transparency presentation briefly outlining the entire certification process	SEA liaison
15 minutes	2. Tape-slide presentation showing a school preparing a school philosophy	SEA liaison
30 minutes	3. An introduction to the auditor's role; simulation activity of the auditor operationalizing a school's philosophy	Auditor
10 minutes	4. What help do we get: An outline of in-service consultants available to help the school in writing its philosophy	SEA liaison
15 minutes	5. Questions for the auditor	School staff
	C O F F E E B R E A K	
20 minutes	6. Tape-slide presentation showing a school conducting a needs assessment	SEA liaison
30 minutes	7. An introduction to the evaluator's role; simulation activity by the evaluator: setting criterion levels and assessing pupil performance	Evaluator
10 minutes	8. What help do we get: An outline of in-service and consultative help available for a school conducting a needs assessment	SEA liaison
15 minutes	9. Questions for the evaluator	School staff

L U N C H

20 minutes	10. Tape-slide presentation showing a school planning its curriculum revision	SEA liaison
30 minutes	11. Curriculum revision: simulation activity by a curriculum consultant planning a curriculum revision	SEA curriculum consultant
10 minutes	12. What help do we get: An outline of in-service and consultative help available for a school planning curriculum revision	SEA liaison
15 minutes	13. Questions about curriculum revision	School staff
15 minutes	14. Tape-slide presentation showing a team visit	SEA liaison

C O F F E E   B R E A K

15 minutes	15. Simulated discussion by the evaluator, auditor, and SEA liaison in planning a team visitation	SEA liaison, evaluator, auditor
15 minutes	16. Questions about the team visit	School staff
30 minutes	17. Panel discussion by staff from schools already involved in the certification process. Possible topics: problems and pitfalls; advantages and rewards	Staff from involved schools
30 minutes	18. Question and answer	School staff
10 minutes	19. Wrap-up and where do we go from here	SEA liaison

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The first step to be undertaken by a school seeking certification as accountable is to produce a statement of its educational philosophy. Unfortunately the statement of a school's philosophy is too often a document produced with great effort by a few people and then filed and promptly forgotten. At its best, the statement can provide the school with a central focus, an organizing point of view for the remainder of the accountability procedure. The document should also provide an outside reader with an overview of the basis for a school's instructional program and operating procedures.

The remainder of this chapter will outline the procedure to be followed by a local school in completing this phase of the accountability certification application. It will follow a general format to be used in succeeding chapters; each step in the phase of the certification application under discussion will be listed along with the required and optional aspects of completing that step. The required aspects are those activities to be completed by each school applying for certification as accountable; the optional aspects are those which a school may but need not choose to complete.

Step 1: Writing the Statement of Philosophy

Required: A: The school will select a committee charged with the writing of the philosophy. Committee membership should include but need not be limited to parents, teachers, and community members. At the high school level it should include students while representation at other levels may be optional. The exact composition of the committee will be decided by the school steering committee. At least one member of the

philosophy committee will be a member of the school steering committee.

B: The philosophy committee will produce a written statement of the school philosophy describing its beliefs about topics which may include but need not be limited to the nature of learning, purpose of the school, the scope of educational experiences a school should provide, the nature of its learners, and a description of a desirable learning atmosphere.

C: The philosophy committee should hold open and announced meetings and should be receptive to input from interested parties not on the committee.

D: Draft copies of the philosophy should be made available to the school staff, students, parents and lay citizens. Opportunity for the above groups to react to and provide input into the school's philosophy should be incorporated into the operating procedures of the committee.

E: While it seems undesirable to specify the exact format of the statement of philosophy, some basic character- istics may be mentioned. In general, the statement should describe the ideal situation for which the school is striving. The statement should be general enough to provide a brief overview of the operating principles deemed desirable by the school staff and its patrons. On the other hand the statement should be concrete and specific enough that it does not become a collection of platitudes. The statement of philosophy should be specific and concrete enough to allow the reader

to discern the distinguishing characteristics of the school.
It should provide a solid basis for further accountability
documents and activities which are based on its content.

F: The philosophy committee should certify that the
school philosophy is not inconsistent with any current state-
ment of district philosophy.

Optional: A: If it so desires, the philosophy committee
may include a set of general school goals with the statement
of philosophy.

Step 2: Acceptance of the Statement by the School

Required: A: Upon completion of a draft copy of the school
philosophy by the committee, the statement should be submitted
to the faculty for its approval. Approval by at least three-
fourths of the faculty should be a must. Failing this degree
of approval, the draft copy is referred back to the philosophy
committee for further revision.

B: The statement of philosophy should also be approved
by the parents of children attending the school. This approval
should be insured by making committee meetings open and announced
(see 1C, above) and by presenting the final draft copy to the
public at an open meeting announced in advance through appropriate
local media.

C: Upon completion of Steps A and B, the draft copy should
be submitted to the school steering committee. The statement
of philosophy should be considered officially adopted upon
approval by two-thirds of the steering committee. If the draft
copy does not receive such approval it is referred back to the
philosophy committee for revision.

Step 3: Making the School Philosophy Operational

Required: A: Upon the official adoption of the school philosophy,
a copy is sent to the auditor. It is the responsibility of
the auditor to analyze the statement of philosophy and list
school policies or teacher behaviors suggesting that each
component of the philosophy is apparent in some operational
procedure within the school.

For example, a school philosophy may contain the state-
ment: "Teachers are encouraged to teach controversial issues..."
The auditor may list on Form A this component of the philosophy
along with several currently controversial issues, that the
school may teach, such as: use of birth control and abortion,
heritability of IQ as outlined by Shockley and others, censor-
ship of movies and books and the Bill of Rights, along with
any current local or national controversial issues. The auditor
may go beyond the classroom situation by inquiring about contro-
versial issues in which the student council is now or has
recently been involved and about procedures the school has
adopted for dealing with controversies between students and
staff or among students that arise in its own operation.

The auditor may wish to list behaviors or policies
indicating that some component is not being implemented. For
example, if the statement, "The school believes in teaching
each student in a way most conducive to his learning style,"
the auditor may suggest that a policy requiring that all students
be taught to read from the same basal reader was a contradiction
to the philosophy component.

It may be expected that occasionally a statement may appear in the philosophy which the auditor feels is too abstract to be made operational in a meaningful way. An example of such a statement taken from a high school philosophy is "To safeguard and perpetuate our American way of life in its best forms and values." Such a statement is so nebulous that any attempt to list teacher behaviors or school policies to reflect such a belief would either be equally nebulous or, open to great controversy about whether such behaviors do in fact, foster the "American way of life in its best forms and values." Rather than listing possible teacher behaviors and school policies to reflect such a statement, the auditor may choose simply to list the statement on Form P1 and ask the staff to describe how such a statement has been made an operational part of the school's procedures.

Step 4: School Response to the Auditor

Required: A: Upon receipt of the auditor's listing of expected behaviors, the school steering committee should designate the appropriate subcommittee to deal with each element of the report. In the above example involving teaching controversial issues, the abortion and birth control issues may be assigned to a student health committee (including the sex education teacher), the heritability question to the science committee, the censorship question to the social studies committee, and the student involvement question to the student activities committee.

Some items may be referred to more than one committee. Other items including those deemed by the auditor as being too nebulous to suggest specific behaviors may be handled by the steering committee itself.

Form P1. Operationalizing the School Philosophy

Statement from School Philosophy	Philosophical Component (i.e., individualized instruction)	Expected Positive Evidence	Possible Negative Evidence

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B: For each component, for which a given committee has responsibility, the committee should respond to the auditor's list of suggested behaviors by describing the corresponding school behaviors as outlined on Form A of this section. For example, the student health committee dealing with the abortion issue might respond that the sophomore sex education classes (open as an elective to all students, chosen by 70% of the sophomore class) heard opposing presentations on the abortion issue by representatives from Planned Parenthood and the Right to Life committees from the local community. The committee might further report that a question and answer session followed each presentation and that students in the class submitted a summary of each presentation along with a short summary of their own values.

C: Each committee should have a complete copy of the auditor's listing of suggested behaviors and procedures so that it may respond to any which were not directly assigned to it by the steering committee. For example, in relation to the school's stated desire to address controversial issues, the social studies committee may report that one of its sections of Current Social Problems did an investigation of the heritability of intelligence.

D: Each committee should list and explain behaviors or policies of the school which reflect an element of the school philosophy but which were not suggested by the auditor.

E: The school should include empirical data which allow the auditor to draw inferences about whether the atmosphere

deemed desirable in the school philosophy is in fact so perceived by students and staff. Data may include anonymous students and staff questionnaires, observation data gathered from classrooms, and unobtrusive data. An example of each will be outlined briefly. Data from students and staff may be gathered by writing agree-disagree type statements from the school philosophy and the auditor's suggested behaviors. Items relating to controversial issues might include: teachers in this school encourage discussion of controversial issues; the student council never gets involved in real controversy; students are encouraged to think for themselves. Noting the patterns of staff and student response to each item would give some evidence of perceptions as to how well that phase of the philosophy was being implemented.

Data from classroom observations may be included. A school whose philosophy included strong beliefs in the values of individualization might use, for example, Indicators of Quality (Vincent, 1972), an observation technique which could present normative data, department by department, if the school desired, on the amount of individualization present in the school.

Data gathered unobtrusively may also be used in this section. For example, the number of students signing up for mini-courses might be one measure of how well the school plans "curricular offerings to meet the interests of a wide variety of students."

Data submitted in this section should include a brief narrative telling the origin of instruments, giving references to associate technical information if available, and specifying the conditions under which data were gathered (i.e., student questionnaires administered anonymously in homerooms by a teacher from a different homeroom). Copies of instruments should be appended to the narrative.

F: The school should submit to the auditor a report which contains the following information for each component of the school philosophy (as the components were delineated by the auditor):

1. Statement of the component as it appears in the school philosophy (i.e., "Teachers are encouraged to deal with controversial issues....");

2. The auditor's list of suggested staff behaviors or school policies which might be present in a school which embraced this component in its philosophy;

3. The school's report from committees to the extent to which the behaviors and policies mentioned by the auditor are, in fact, a part of the school's operation;

4. The school's report on the extent to which behaviors and policies supporting the philosophy component not suggested by the auditor are a part of the school's regular operation;

5. Where available, data which reflect the extent to which the component is operating in the school;

6. The school staff interpretation of how well the philosophy component has been implemented into the school's operating procedure. (Note: The evaluator may lend technical assistance at this point, but it is important that the interpretation be that of the school staff.)

7. The school staff plans for further implementation of this component of the philosophy component into

the school's operating procedures, <u>if</u>, <u>in fact</u>,
<u>the staff feels such further implementation is</u>
<u>desirable</u>. (Note: Again, while the evaluator or
other consultants may be used for assistance, this
plan should represent the thinking of the staff as
a whole.)

STEP	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY	SEA RESPONSIBILITY	EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITY	AUDITOR RESPONSIBILITY
1. Writing the statement of philosophy.	1. Select a committee including parents, teachers, lay citizens and, in high schools, students. 2. Produce a written statement of philosophy. 3. The committee should hold open and announced meeting. 4. Draft copies shall be made available to staff, students, parents, lay citizens. 5. The philosophy statement should describe the ideal state for which the school is striving. 6. The committee should certify that the school philosophy is not inconsistent with the district philosophy. 7. A set of general school goals may be included. (Optional)	1. Provide workshop training in writing statements of philosophy. 2. Make copies of exemplary statements of philosophy available.	1. Provide advice and assistance in selection of committee members. 2. Provide expertise in writing philosophy statement. 3. Monitor the process of writing. 4. Provide narrative on process.	

STEP	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY	SEA RESPONSIBILITY	EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITY	AUDITOR RESPONSIBILITY
2. Acceptance of the statement by the school.	1. Approval by at least 3/4's of the faculty. 2. Approval by parents at an open meeting. 3. Approval by at least 2/3's of the steering committee.		1. Monitor the process of school acceptance, provide narrative.	
3. Making the philosophy operational.				1. List policies and teacher behavior to suggest positive or negative evidence that each component is operational in the school.
4. School response to the auditor.	1. Steering committee designated responsibility for each component for one or more committees. 2. Any committee may suggest evidence for any component. 3. Committees may also suggest evidence not listed by the auditor. 4. Empirical data shall also be included to allow inferences about the operation of various components within the school.	1. Provide workshop expertise in relating teacher behavior and school policies to the philosophy.	1. Provide expertise in generating positive and negative evidence of implementation of philosophy components. 2. Provide advice and assistance in selecting, administering, scoring, instruments and interpreting empirical evidence. 3. Assist in interpretation of both positive and negative evidence. 4. Advise and assist in writing school plan. 5. Provide narrative description of the process.	

STEP	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY	SEA RESPONSIBILITY	EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITY	AUDITOR RESPONSIBILITY
	5. School replies to auditor on each component listing positive and negative evidence, school interpretation and plan for improvement.			

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In order to insure that school efforts are directed toward the most crucial areas, a school needs assessment shall be conducted. Allowing for individual school preferences while preserving an overall framework, each needs assessment component will be described with its required and optional features.

Step 1: Listing the full range of school goals

Required: A: The school will list all of the goals (cognitive, affective and psychomotor) that may be considered as possibly desirable school outcomes. (Note: it is not necessary at this stage to require that all of the goals be important for the school. One of the functions of a needs assessment is to specify the most important school goals.)

B: The goals should be worded as statements of desirable student behaviors, attitudes or feelings rather than processes chosen by the school to attain a particular end. For example, the goal statement "Reads books and magazines voluntarily" is an appropriate goal statement; it specifies a potentially desirable student behavior. The goal statement "Decrease the dropout rate" is not an appropriate goal since it describes something the school staff will try to do rather than directly describing student performance.

C: The school should state the goals with sufficient specificity that evaluation may be done fairly directly from the goal statements but with sufficient generality that the number of goals does not become overwhelming. Goal statements which are extremely general (i.e., To gain a general education)

do not facilitate direct evaluation of pupil performance.
The concept of general education is so broad that it would be
virtually impossible to evaluate with two or three measures
and assure that one had assessed all relevant aspects of the
goal.

On the other hand, by stating goals so specifically that
they are virtually behavioral objectives, one may easily be
overwhelmed by sheer numbers in certain phases of a needs
assessment. For example, stating goals as specifically as
"Identifies major periods of American literature and names
three authors for each period" would produce an excessive
number of goal statements.

Although these numbers are by no means definitive it is
believed that generally a set of 50-150 goal statements would
be sufficient.

D: For each of the listed school goals, the school should
provide the more specific objectives which relate to that goal
area. The learner objectives need not (though they may) be
written to the level of specificity of behavioral objectives
with assessment conditions and criterion of satisfactory
performance. However, they should be written with sufficient
specificity to provide concrete information for teachers in
planning instructional programs to facilitate student attain-
ment of school goals.

Each of the school's learner objectives should relate to
a school goal; and taken as a group, the learner objectives for
a goal area should cover all of the behaviors necessary and
sufficient to provide evidence of goal attainment.

Optional: A: Within the limitations discussed above, the number
and actual statement of the goals is optional.

B: The school may either generate its own set of goal
statements, or adopt or adapt an existing set of goals.

While writers in this area have generally felt that be-
cause of the amount of time and effort necessary to write a
set of goal statements and because the final result will, to
a large extent, duplicate previous efforts, it is generally
advisable to adopt or adapt an existing set of goals (Klein
et. al., 1972). The choice, however, is the school's.

C: Where the school is serving two or more distinct
populations, it may wish to state goals which are particular
to students in a given program or curriculum as well as goals
which are common to all students. For example, a school which
has a significant proportion but not all of its students en-
rolled in English as a Second Language or Bilingual/Bicultural
programs would probably find it desirable to specify a somewhat
though not completely different set of goal statements for
students enrolled in these programs.

Schools selecting this option should make appropriate
adjustments in the remainder of their needs assessment. The
decision as to the degree to which separate needs assessments
are conducted for separate curricula should be made by the
school in conjunction with the evaluator and the SEA liaison
and are subject to review by the approval board.

Step 2: Exempt from rating those goal statements concerned with basic
learning skills.

Required: A: After the full range of goal statements has been

listed, the school may exempt from the rating by importance those goal statements which concern the most basic learning skills. The purpose of this exemption can best be understood in relation to Step #3: Determining the perceived importance of each goal. By exempting from the rating those goals concerned with basic skills, the system prevents a situation in which a goal such as "Reads for enjoyment" is perceived as more important than "Comprehends what he reads." Since the student with severe difficulties in comprehending what he reads is unlikely to find his reading enjoyable, the school that finds the goal relating to reading enjoyment to be more crucial than reading comprehension would find itself in a logically untenable position. The purpose of this step therefore is to exempt from rating by importance those goals on which students must be expected to achieve a reasonable proficiency in order to succeed in other school learnings.

B: The goals so exempted should include at least one goal concerned with each of the following areas: reading comprehension, listening skills and arithmetic computation.

Optional: A: Goals other than the minimum listed above may also be exempted from rating by importance at the discretion of the local school. The decision to exempt other goals may be based in part on the particular breakdown of school goals and the program of studies offered by the school. For example, a high school with a strong college preparatory program may decide that critical reading and note taking skills are basic to other learnings in the school program. That is, critical reading and

note taking skills may be deemed so basic to other school

activities that for students in the college prep program,

serious deficiencies in these skills would present virtually

insurmountable difficulties in other areas of school learning.

Step 3: Determining the perceived importance of each educational goal.

Required: A: Based on a numerical rating system, the school should

list the perceived importance of each of the educational goals

listed above in Step #1.

B: The rating procedure will involve teachers, adminis-

trators, parents, lay citizens, and (in junior and senior

high schools), students. Recent graduates, para-professionals,

and board members may be included.

C: The participants in the rating process will have a

personal (face to face) explanation of the process in which

they are involved and are to be provided with a copy of the

results along with the school's interpretation of those results.

The face to face explanation may take the form of either a

meeting (or series of meetings) or interviews conducted in the

home by trained observers.

Optional: A: The rating may be done on any numerical basis decided

upon by the district. It is recommended that a scale with at

least five points be used. Also, there are certain metric

advantages in using a forced distribution.

B: Some methods of needs assessment produce average

weightings by specified groups; others provide for weighted

linear combinations of group averages; still others specify

small group consensus techniques.

Schools may choose from any of the above methods but should

provide a rationale accompanying that decision.

The method to be used should be explained to participants

before the goal rating takes place.

Step 4: Determining the perceived student performance of educational

goals.

Required: A: This step is not required.

Optional: A: If used, this step involves having participants rate

on a numerical scale how well they believe the school is now

functioning in a given goal area. The school may wish to gather

data to obtain information on perceived strengths and weaknesses

of the school operation. However, the school should realize

that these data represent perceived (as opposed to actual)

student performance.

B: Schools utilizing this step may involve all individuals

who take part in Step 3, above: Determining the perceived

importance of each educational goal. A summary and interpreta-

tion of the data should be made available to participants.

Step 5: Determining perceived school responsibility for each goal.

Required: A: This step is not required.

Optional: A: If used, this step involves asking participants to

rate on a numerical scale the degree to which the school should

be responsible for student attainment of each goal area.

Schools electing to use this step may wish to use the model

developed by Alvord (1973) in which each participant rates

each goal according to: (1) perceived importance of the goal,

(2) perceived student attainment of the goal, and (3) school

responsibility for the goal.

Alternately, schools <u>not</u> <u>wishing</u> to use this step may
wish to ask participants to rate each goal in terms of how
important it is for the school to help students attain a
particular goal, thereby combining the importance and respon-
sibility ratings.

<u>B</u>: Schools electing to include this step shall include
as raters all persons who take part in Step 3: Determining
the perceived importance of each goal. Summary results and
interpretation of the data shall be made available to partici-
pants.

Step 6: <u>Selection of goals on which pupil performance shall be assessed.</u>

<u>Required</u>: <u>A</u>: Based on data acquired above, the school shall select
a number of goals on which to assess current student performance.

<u>B</u>: Although no universally specified number of goal
statements need be selected, the following constraints shall
be in effect:

1. Assessment should be conducted on all goal
   areas specified by the school as basic skill
   areas in Step 2 above.

2. In addition, assessment should be conducted on
   at least the ten (or ten percent, whichever is
   greater) goals rated as most important.

3. Each department or each teaching team should
   be responsible for the assessment of at least
   three goal areas for which it has primary
   responsibility.

4. Goals from the cognitive, psychomotor and
   affective domains are included in the assessment.

Optional: A: Any number of goals beyond the minimum number as
specified in the above parameters may be selected for assess-
ment. The school is cautioned not to select so many goals for
assessment that: a) a particular group of students will be
over assessed; b) so much data is generated that the staff does
not have time to interpret it and institute necessary changes.

Step 7: Specifying performance measures for those goal areas selected
for pupil assessment.

Required: A: For each goal specified under Step #2 above, as a
basic skill area and each goal selected under Step #6 above,
the school should specify the method(s) to be used to assess
pupil performance.

B: At least one unique measure should be specified for
each goal area to be assessed. The measure(s) selected for
a goal area shall sample student behavior on at least 75% of
the learner objectives related to that goal.

C: Using Form #NA1, the school should provide evidence
of the reliability and validity of the measure to be used.
Where reliability and validity data are not available, the
school may specify appropriate plans to begin gathering such
data.

Optional: A: More than one measure on some or all of the goal areas
to be assessed may be used by the school where the goal area
is extremely crucial or no single measure appears suitable for
assessment.

B: The selection of the actual measures to be used is
left to the discretion of the local school. The school is
encouraged to go beyond the realm of standardized tests and

use techniques such as unobtrusive measures, classroom

observation techniques, structured interviews, teacher-made

tests and National Assessment materials in its assessment.

It is recommended that whenever possible the school

select measures in such a way that no single group of students

is excessively measured.

Step 8: Setting criterion levels of satisfactory student performance.

Required: A: For each measure of student performance for each goal

area to be assessed, the school should specify a criterion

level of satisfactory student performance. The criterion level

should be the minimum level of student performance with which

the school shall be satisfied.

B: In setting criterion levels of performance, the school

should involve teachers, administrators, pupil personnel employees,

parents, and lay citizens. High schools will involve current

students; junior highs or middle schools may get feedback from

upper classmen. Involvement of such additional groups as the

school deems desirable is optional.

C: In setting criterion levels, those involved should

have the appropriate information about the measurement device(s)

being used needed to make reasoned decisions about the criterion

level. In cases of teacher-made tests, this may involve a

review of specific learner objectives to be assessed, and sample

items from the test. For published tests, information about

the norming groups, conditions of administration, and sample

items may be appropriate. For non-reactive measures, a complete

description of the method of data gathering methods may be

appropriate and sufficient.

D: Because the setting of criterion levels is a critical
yet largely unexplored area of needs assessment, the school
should insure that during this process there are sufficient
resource persons with expertise in the areas of assessment,
measurement and testing to allow for the most enlightened
decision making possible on the part of the group.

Optional: A: The criterion levels may be stated in norm-referenced
or criterion-referenced terms depending on the type of measure
and the wishes of the participants.

B: Multiple criterion levels may be set for different
groups of students on some or all of the measures if the school
so desires.

Step 9: Assessing student behavior in specified goal areas by selected
measures.

Required: A: Using the measures selected above in Step 7, student
behavior is assessed in a manner appropriate with the nature
of the instruments.

B: In conjunction with this step the school should make
plans to insure the validity of the student performance chores.
Such plans may involve the collection or verification of unob-
trusive data by an outside evaluator, the proctoring of tests
by someone other than the classroom teacher, the assessment on
some measure before criterion levels have been set, and preserving
anonymity of pupil responses on attitude or personality measures.
Working with the independent evaluator, the school should develop
appropriate methods to insure valid data for each measure.
Operation of the plan may be reported by the evaluator using

Form NA2. The school plan is subject to audit and to review by the approval board.

    C: The school must take all necessary steps to insure appropriate use of the data including protecting the privacy of students by not making public individual test scores or item responses.

Optional: A: Depending on the number of students available and the nature of the assessment device, the school may sample students for assessment purposes. Sampling may be simple or stratified random sampling and subject to audit. Sampling should not reduce the number of students assessed on a group basis below 200 nor on an individual basis below 50.

Step 10: Interpreting the needs assessment data.

    Required: A: The school should report on the analysis and interpretation of the needs assessment data. For each goal statement the following information should be included: perceived goal importance, perceived pupil performance (where available), and perceived school responsibility (where available). For each goal area selected for assessment purposes, the following additional information should be included: assessment measure(s), criterion level(s) of satisfactory student performance, and actual student performance. The report should also include an interpretation of the school's most critical needs based on the needs assessment data. (See Form NA3)

    B: The report should be prepared under the supervision of the evaluator and in conjunction with the steering committee. Interpretive remarks based on the data should be approved by the steering committee.

C: The interpretation of the needs assessment and the
steering committee judgment as to the most critical needs
should be presented at a public meeting. Opportunities for
minority reports of the committee members should be available.

FORM <u>NA1</u>: DESCRIPTION OF MEASURES
USED IN ASSESSING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Goal Area _____

_____

Measure to be used _____

_____

Where available (given publisher's address, published reference or attach copy
of the instrument):

_____

_____

Reliability Evidence (include type of reliability, coefficient(s) population
tested). Where evidence is not available, present school plans to gather
the data.

_____

_____

_____

Validity Evidence (include type of validity, coefficient(s) population tested).
Where evidence is not available, present school plans to gather the data.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Satisfaction with the measure (include comments or suggestions to other schools
which may be considering use of the measure).

_____

_____

_____

_____

Form <u>NA2</u>: Plan for collection of student assessment data (To be completed by the evaluator).

Goal Statement	Measurement Device	Data Collection Plan[1]	Actual Data Gathering Conditions[2]

[1]Describe conditions of data collection which will insure that the assessment data will be collected non-reactively and independently of the setting of criterion levels.

[2]Describe any deviations from the plan and the reasons for said deviations.

FORM <u>NA3</u>:

Goal Statement: _____

_____

_____

Perceived Importance: Value: _____   Rank: _____

Perceived Student Performance: Value: _____

Perceived School Responsibility: Value: _____   Rank: _____

Evaluation Device:

Grade level to be measured:

Criterion level:

Measured Pupil Performance (stated in terms of the criterion level and where
norms are available, in relation to a norm group):

School interpretation of assessment data:

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STEP	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY	SEA RESPONSIBILITY	EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITY	AUDITOR RESPONSIBILITY
1. List the full range of school goals.	1. List all goals that may be considered possibly desirable school outcomes. 2. State goals as desirable student behaviors. 3. State goals with appropriate specificity/generality. 4. Provide statement of school objectives for each goal area.	1. Maintain and make available by subject matter areas or other appropriate classification a bank of goals and objectives. 2. Provide workshop assistance and training materials in writing goals and objectives.	1. Assist the school with generation and statement of goals and objectives and in arranging them in meaningful relation to each other. 2. Provide a narrative report of process used in Step 1.	1. Critique goals and objectives for completeness, wording and relation to each other.
2. Exempt from rating those goal statements concerned with basic learning skills.	1. Determine which of the school goals represent basic learning skills. 2. Include at least one goal in reading comprehension, listening skills and arithmetic computation.		1. Assist the school in determining which goals represent basic learning skills.	
3. Determine the perceived importance of each educational goal.	1. List the perceived importance of each educational goal. 2. Involve teachers, administrators, parents, lay citizens, and students (junior and senior highs).	1. Provide workshop training in sampling and surveying. 2. Provide simulation experience in Steps 3, 4, & 5.	1. Provide expertise in selecting suitable samples of survey groups. 2. Monitor or conduct the meeting(s) at which Steps 3, 4, & 5 are conducted. 3. Provide narrative explanation of Steps 3, 4, & 5.	1. Critique procedure used in Steps 3, 4, & 5.

STEP	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY	SEA RESPONSIBILITY	EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITY	AUDITOR RESPONSIBILITY
4. Determine the perceived student performance of educational goals. (Optional)		(See Step 3)	(See Step 3)	
5. Determine perceived student responsibility for each goal. (Optional)		(See Step 3)	(See Step 3)	
6. Select goals on which pupil performance shall be assessed.	1. Based on data previously gathered, select goals on which student performance shall be assessed. 2. Assess all basic skill areas. 3. Conduct assessment on top ten (or 10%) of most important goals. 4. Each department or teaching team shall assess performance on at least one goal area. 5. Include cognitive, affective, and psychomotor goals.		1. Provide advice and assistance in selecting goals for assessment. 2. Provide narrative report on procedures used in Step 6.	1. Critique procedure used and selection of goals selected for assessment.

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NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STEP	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY	SEA RESPONSIBILITY	EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITY	AUDITOR RESPONSIBILITY
7. Specify performance measures.	1. Specify methods to assess pupil performance on goals selected in Step 6. 2. Use at least one measure per goal. 3. Provide evidence of validity and reliability.	1. Maintain file of assessment instruments including use by other schools, reliability and validity data, relation to goal statements, and remarks by other schools.	1. Provide technical expertise in selection and/or construction of assessment instruments.	1. Critique measures selected for assessment for their reliability, validity, suitability and the variety of procedures selected.
8. Set criterion levels of satisfactory student performance.	1. Set criterion levels for each measure for each goal selected in Step 6. 2. Involve teachers, administrators, pupil personnel employees, parents, lay citizens and students (junior and senior high). 3. Inform involved participants about the instrument. 4. Provide resource persons during decision making process.	1. Provide workshop training including simulation and resource materials in setting criterion levels.	1. Monitor or conduct the meeting(s) at which Step 8 is conducted.	1. Critique procedures used in setting criterion levels. 2. Provide comments on levels selected as to the suitability for the population consistency, level of expectation.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STEP	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY	SEA RESPONSIBILITY	EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITY	AUDITOR RESPONSIBILITY
9. Assess student behavior in specified goal areas.	1. Assess student behavior in manner appropriate with the nature of the instruments. 2. Make plans to insure validity of student performance data. 3. Protect confidentiality of individual scores.	1. Provide workshop training and resource materials in assessment methods.	1. Provide advice and assistance in the proper administration of assessment instruments. 2. Provide advice and assistance in planning assessment procedures and insure validity of student performance data and non-interference between, and setting knowledge of assessment results criterion levels.	1. Audit and critique procedures used to insure validity of student performance data.
10. Interpret the needs assessment data.	1. Report and interpretation of the needs assessment data. 2. Interpretive remarks shall be approved by the steering committee. 3. Make a report at a public meeting and provide opportunities for minority reports.	1. Provide workshop training including simulation in interpretation of assessment data.	1. Provide assistance in reporting and interpreting needs assessment data. 2. Attend and provide input into meeting(s) leading to interpretive report. 3. Provide narrative report on procedure used in interpreting the data.	1. Critique data interpretation and report.

CURRICULUM REVISION

Data from the needs assessment and the study of the school philosophy can form the basis for meaningful curriculum revision. Important school goals on which student achievement is significantly below desired performance level and aspects of school philosophy which have been less than fully implemented in the school's basic operational procedure form the basis for curriculum revision. Thus, the concept of curriculum as it is used in this document refers to the school's program in the broad sense of the term. Curriculum is more than course offerings and study guides; it includes all aspects of the school as an institution as experienced by the student. To be sure, curriculum in the broad sense of the term includes the course offerings but it also includes aspects such as the organizational patterns of the school, its rules and regulations, the atmosphere for learning, and tolerance of individual differences.

Because the curriculum planning and resultant curriculum revision will be based on previous data gathered by the school, it is not possible to specify in advance the outcomes of this stage of the application for certification. Therefore this section of the narrative will delineate desirable aspects of the curriculum planning process.

The outlined procedure for curriculum planning and revision calls for a careful study to be made by the faculty of the data gathered during the needs assessment and philosophy implementation phases of the application. Based on this study the faculty delineates problem areas and seeks their solution. Decisions as to the number and scope of the problems to be identified as change areas are left to the school. In this and several other areas of the curriculum planning section, a great deal of latitude is given to the school staff. In order that their

efforts have a maximum chance of success, it is hoped that the following

conditions prevail in the school:

1) Decisions as to the identification of problem areas
are made to maximize the chances for improvement of the total
school program. Each faculty member should be directly in-
volved in seeking the solution to one or more identified
problems; no faculty member should be burdened excessively
with curriculum revision.

2) The school should provide the faculty with the
resources needed for in-depth study. Clerical assistance,
consultant help, travel to exemplary programs and released
time should be available to the staff in their search for
the most efficient solution to the identified problems.

3) The school should announce the budget available for
curricular changes. For example, realizing that only
$10,000 is available for curricular improvement in next
year's budget may inhibit a tendency toward "solutions" which
involve hiring an extra teacher and three part-time aides.
The very real limitations of available resources may help
to encourage imaginative "free" solutions to problems. The
staff should be encouraged in its efforts not only to set
forth major curricular and organizational changes, but also,
where desirable, to seek minimally disruptive solutions which
can be implemented at no additional cost to the school.
Additional funds for curricular change may be sought through
project applications or by trimming an existing area of the
school budget.

Step 1: Study of available school data

Required: A: The data generated by the school needs assessment

and the study of the implementation of the school philosophy

should be made available to the entire faculty.

B: Individually and in groups the faculty should have

the opportunity to study the data of particular relevance

to their own areas of responsibility.

C: Individually or in small groups as is appropriate,

faculty members should interpret the data at hand with regard

to implied areas of curriculum revision.

D: Data regarding pupil performance in basic skill
areas and implementation of philosophical components in the
school as a whole should be studied by the faculty at large.
It is the responsibility of the steering committee to prepare
interpretations of these data.

Step 2: Consideration of alternative approaches

Required: A: After the faculty has decided upon the most
appropriate areas for curriculum revision based on school
data, the next step is to consider alternative solutions
to the identified problem.

B: Consideration of alternative solutions to identified
problems can best be made in light of available resources
to solve the problem. Therefore, the faculty should have
available any pertinent information regarding available
resources. Building or departmental budget restrictions
should be made known to the faculty as should the outlook
for the coming year.

C: In searching for the most efficient solution to
identified problems the faculty may consider (but need not
be limited to): knowledge from the discipline in question,
successful programs for similar populations in other schools,
input from consultants, resources available from professional
organizations and published curricula and materials aimed at
the identified target area.

D: The principal and the steering committee should keep
informed of the progress of the several faculty groups and
should facilitate their work however possible, such as

encouraging cooperative solutions to a given problem, or

recommending resources helpful to more than one group.

    E: The principal and the steering committee should

have the responsibility to keep abreast of the direction

taken by each faculty group and work to bring the groups

together to insure vertical and horizontal articulation of

the school's curriculum.

    F: Consideration of problems involving the basic skill

areas is the responsibility of the steering committee. The

committee may choose to handle the problem area(s) itself

or designate each area to a multidisciplinary ad hoc committee

for review and recommendation.

Step 3: Preparation of recommended solution(s)

    Required: A: Based on available school data, a careful consider-

        ation of alternatives and available resources, the faculty

        group assigned to each problem should prepare a report including

        the following information:

        1. Concise statement of the problem

        2. Data supporting the above statement

        3. Description of considerations affecting alternative
           solutions to the problem including:

           a. current thinking from subject matter experts;
           b. implications of relevant research;
           c. reviews of solutions reported in printed sources;
           d. reports of visitations made to nearby schools;
           e. recommendations made by local or outside
              consultants;
           f. cost considerations, i.e., CAI vs. programmed
              materials

        4. Recommended plan for solving the problem including
           narrative description, proposed time line and
           proposed budget

5. Evaluation plan for assessing the effectiveness
of the proposed change.

B: The recommended changes should be presented to the

steering committee in an open and announced meeting. There

should be opportunity for questions from the floor.

Step 4: Development of curriculum revision plan

Required: A: Based on input from the faculty, the steering committee

should prepare a plan for school curriculum revision. The steering

committee, working within a specified budget, should judge the

merits of each proposed area of revision in light of:

1. How well the proposed revision addresses the
identified needs of the school.

2. How well it fits the school's stated philosophy.

3. How disruptive the change would be for the
remainder of the school.

4. How feasible the proposed change is in light
of available and required resources for its
implementation.

B: The committee's plan should be presented at an

open and announced meeting. The presentation should allow

for faculty, students and interested members of the community

to receive an overview of the adopted curricular changes.

C: The auditor should prepare a written report to be

made available to the school and to the state commenting on

the implications of the proposed curriculum revisions as they

relate to the stated philosophy of the school.

Step 5: Implementation of revisions

Required: A: The evaluator should work with the staff responsible

for each of the changes to be implemented in developing: a

time line for implementation, a method for process monitoring,

and a proposed method to determine the success of the modification in achieving the desired change. These plans may be quite brief for small, easily monitored changes; for more elaborate curriculum modifications, more detailed plans may be necessary.

B: Curriculum revision as adopted by the school steering committee should be implemented. The staff responsible for the implementation of the revision should note the adherence to or deviation from the proposed plan and note their effect on the change. For example, if a manufacturer's strike prevented the delivery of certain equipment needed to teach a unit, the lack of the necessary equipment may cause the staff to modify the unit accordingly.

C: Periodic assessment of the implementation and effectiveness should be made according to the schedule outlined by the staff and the evaluator. For any changes in effect for at least three months at the time of the on-site visit, an interim report should be made available to the visitation team.

D: A decision to retain, eliminate or modify each curriculum revision should be made by the staff in consultation with the evaluator. The schedule for decision-making and the kinds of information to be considered is left to the local school in the realization that such considerations vary widely according to the nature of the modification and the parameters imposed by the local situation.

E: At the time of the decision, a brief report summarizing the nature of the change, the decision as to its effectiveness and the reasons for that decision should be filed with the SEA.

STEP	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY	SEA RESPONSIBILITY	EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITY	AUDITOR RESPONSIBILITY
1. Study of available school data.	1. School faculty studies data from needs assessment and philosophy implementation study. 2. Individuals and small groups do indepth study of data relevant to their areas of responsibility. 3. Data is interpreted with regard to implied curriculum changes. 4. Data relevant to basic skill areas and philosophy components are studied by the faculty as a whole.	1. Provide workshop training in the interpretation and synthesis of needs assessment and philosophy implementation data.	1. Advise and assist in data interpretation and synthesis.	
2. Consideration of alternative approaches.	1. The faculty should consider alternative solutions to identified problems. 2. Information about available resources should be made available to the faculty. 3. The faculty should consider all appropriate sources of data in judging alternative solutions.	1. Maintain list of curricular consultants. 2. Aid in information searches.	1. Advise and assist in consideration of plan to evaluate effectiveness of proposed curricular changes.	

STEP	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY	SEA RESPONSIBILITY	EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITY	AUDITOR RESPONSIBILITY
	4. The principal and steering committee should keep informed of overall progress and encourage cooperative solutions.			
	5. The principal and the steering committee should be responsible for horizontal and vertical articulation of the curriculum.			
	6. The principal and the steering committee should take responsibility for identified problems in basic skill areas and in implementation of the school philosophy.			
3. Preparation of recommended solution.	1. The faculty group responsible for each identified problem presents its recommendation(s) to the steering committee.	1. Provide consultant help in curriculum construction and coordination.	1. Monitor the prescribed process.	
	2. The recommendations should be presented at an open and announced meeting.			

STEP	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY	SEA RESPONSIBILITY	EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITY	AUDITOR RESPONSIBILITY
4. Development of curriculum revision plan.	1. The steering committee prepares a plan of school curriculum revision. 2. The plan is presented at an open and announced meeting.		1. Monitor the prescribed process.	1. Auditor prepares report commenting on proposed curriculum changes as they relate to school philosophy.
5. Implementation of revisions.	1. Work with evaluator in developing time line, process monitoring and evaluation plan. 2. Curriculum revision is implemented and deviations from plan are noted. 3. Changes are monitored and their effectiveness is assessed. 4. At an appropriate time, a decision based on available information is made to retain, modify or eliminate each modification. 5. At an appropriate time, report to SEA the decision regarding each curriculum modification.		1. Work with school staff in developing time line, process monitoring and evaluation plan. 2. Consult with staff on implementation evaluation, process monitoring and assessment of curriculum modifications. 3. Consult with staff to prepare report to SEA on the effectiveness of the curriculum modification in question.	

THE TEAM VISIT

At this point in the certification procedure, the applicant school has written and determined the extent of implementation of the school philosophy, conducted a needs assessment and planned and initiated curriculum revision based on information gained in its self study. The next step is the team visit. The team visit is essentially an audit conducted by personnel from outside the district and is designed to take a fresh look at the entire process in which the school has been involved. The chairman of the team visit may be the departmental person who has served as the liaison person during the certification procedure. Many states include a team visit as part of their input-based school approval plans; in such cases the state may want to modify the plan outlined in this section to incorporate aspects of that team visit with the procedure previously outlined.

Although a general procedure for planning and conducting a team visit is described in this section, actual procedures may vary somewhat depending on the needs of the particular school. It is important to keep in mind the two major purposes of the team visit: 1) to audit the procedures conducted to date and 2) to bring a fresh point of view to the situation. Hopefully, the intensive visit by outsiders will offer an additional perspective of the process and produce new insights into any problem areas.

Step 1: Plan of the Team Visit

Required: A: Approximately four to six months before the scheduled team visit the designated auditor should meet with the evaluator and the SEA liaison person to plan the visit. By bringing together the three persons outside the daily operation of the

school who have the most intimate knowledge of the progress

enjoyed and problems encountered by the school in its

application process, a plan may be developed so that the

team visit is tailored to the needs of the local school.

Further bases for planning the team visit may come from

consideration of the specific areas of difficulty encountered

by the school with an outlook as to how the team visit can

help the school overcome those difficulties. Questions such

as the following may be considered in planning the team visit:

1) Are the professional staff of the school given the
   opportunity to operate in a professionally account-
   able manner? Are they given the responsibility to
   make decisions and follow through on those decisions?

2) Does the school promote professional growth? Is there
   a wide variety of inservice options from which staff
   may choose? Is the staff actively involved in de-
   fining and selecting those options? Are there
   tangible rewards for professional growth?

3) Did the school make an honest effort to follow
   procedures outlined in the application procedure?
   Was there active community involvement? Were short-
   comings recognized so that they could be overcome?

4) Do the current school plans and policies reflect the
   special nature of the community and school staff?
   Is there evidence of wide involvement in planning
   and implementing procedures? Is school-community
   communication a two-way process?

5) What progress has the school made toward solving its
   identified problems? Where resistant problems occur
   are efforts continuing? Are new solutions being
   sought? Are there significant problems recognized
   by outsiders which are not being dealt with by the
   school?

Optional A: If the team visit is being combined with

the input-approval visit conducted by the state, the planning

team may want to pick at random one or more departmental areas

to be audited according to input standards.

Step 2: Preparation for the Visit

Required: A: The presentation of the general visitation plan

should be made to the entire staff with opportunity for the

staff to provide input as to how they feel the planned

visitation could be more helpful. The chairman should

receive and consider any suggestions made by the staff but

he is not obligated to accept them.

B: The chairman is responsible for selection of members

of the visitation team and providing team members with necessary

background information. The number and specific characteristics

of the team members will depend on the size and organizational

complexity of the school and the plan outlined for the team

visit. One or more team members should be directly assigned

to each organizational subdivision of the school (i.e., grade

level or subject matter area). Also, the chairman may choose

to include team members with special responsibility for areas

such as parental involvement, student life, school administra-

tion and special populations served by the school. Each team

member should possess expertise in the area in which he is

to function during the visitation.

C: Upon their selection to the visitation team, team

members should meet with the chairman and at his discretion,

with the evaluator, for purposes of becoming familiar with

the school's progress to date. Each member should be given

copies of all school-auditor- and evaluator-produced documents

pertinent to his own area and those which pertain to the school

as a whole. The chairman (and evaluator) should familiarize

team members with special difficulties encountered by the school,
unresolved problems, and plans for the team visit. Team
members who feel a need for additional advance information
from the school should make their request through the chairman
who may pass the request onto the school. The visitation team
members, in addition to becoming familiar with difficulties
and problems encountered by the staff, should also become
aware of the staff's success. Indeed, any school which has
made the required honest self-examination should be recognized
for this accomplishment by the visiting team.

      Optional A: At the option of the chairman, the school
staff may be asked to submit a preferred list of persons they
would like to have serve on the visitation team.

Step 3: Visitation by the Auditing Team

    Required: A: Although there will generally be a formal visit
lasting one or more days, the visitation itself may assume one
of a variety of formats. The actual visit during which the
entire team is at the school may last only one day with a
combination of preliminary or follow-up visits made by
individuals or small groups of team members during the weeks
preceding and following the team visit. While the team visit
itself should be scheduled and announced to the staff well in
advance, the individual visits may be made more informally
with announcement made only at the time of the visit itself.
Should the planning team decide that preliminary team visits
may be made, the staff should be informed of the purpose of
the visits and who will be making them.

Preliminary and follow-up visits can be useful for seeing

the school in a more natural situation than occurs during a

one or two day team visit. Such individual visits should be

made in the spirit of an in-depth study of the school operations

and not an attempt to "catch the staff off-guard". Careful

selection of team members and a thorough indoctrination as

to their task can help insure that the team visits individually

or in groups are properly undertaken.

Optional A: Preliminary and follow-up visits are

optional. Decisions as to their inclusion in the visitation

plan are the responsibility of the chairman.

Step 4: Written report

Required: A: At the conclusion of the visitation period (to include

preliminary and follow-up visits where planned) each team

member is responsible for the preparation of a written report

which addresses itself to the focus of the team visitation

as originally outlined by the auditor, evaluator, and SEA

liaison. The school report should be compiled by the chairman

and presented in written format to the school staff.

B: In addition, the staff should prepare for the SEA

coordinating council a report outlining plans for modifica-

tion or refinement of programs, current reassessment needed,

areas of professional skill development planned and modifications

or planning efforts foreseen by the staff before the beginning

of the next accountability cycle. Assessment, planning and

change are continuous and ongoing elements in the accountable

school. This status report should summarize for the

coordinating council the plans the school staff has made

for the near future in light of progress to date and where

they want to go.

Optional A: Upon receipt of the report by the visita-

tion team, the school staff should have the opportunity to

reply in writing to any part of the report they consider

to be unfair or misleading.

STEP	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY	SEA RESPONSIBILITY	EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITY	AUDITOR RESPONSIBILITY
1. Plan of the team visit.		1. Meet with evaluator and auditor to formulate visitation plan. 2. Combine visit with input evaluation visit (Optional).	1. Meet with auditor and SEA liaison to formulate visitation plan.	1. Meet with SEA liaison and evaluator to formulate visitation plan.
2. Preparation for the visit.	1. May provide auditor with input as to how visitation can be most helpful.		1. May meet with team members.	1. Present plan of visitation to school staff. 2. Ask school to submit names of team members (Optional). 3. Select team members. 4. Familiarize team members with school situation.
3. Visitation by the auditing team.	1. Host the visiting team.		1. Be available to the school during team visitation.	1. Conduct on-site visit with all team members at pre-announced time. 2. Conduct preliminary and/or follow-up visits (Optional).
4. Written report.	1. Outline for SEA plans for change, further assessment or training needed before beginning of next cycle. 2. Reply in writing to any part of audit report considered unfair or misleading (Optional).			1. Write report which addresses itself to focus of team visit.

PRESENTATION TO THE STATE

The final step in the application involves the school's formal
presentation to the state education agency and the request for certifica-
tion as an accountable school. In making this presentation the school
is informing the state of its self assessment, planning and modification
of school curriculum to better reach community accepted goals, and its
plans for the future. The school's presentation may be supplemented by
the views of the chairman presenting an independent view of the process
and its products. In addition, provision will be made for the presentation
from interested community members of any minority reports expressing
dissatisfaction with the school's responsiveness to its clientele.

The report will be made to the SEA coordinating council who will
decide whether or not to certify the school as accountable. The decision
of the coordinating council should be consistent with the accountability
mode. The school should be judged not solely on the basis of input,
whether the community can afford the latest in sophisticated instructional
media or whether the library has the recommended number of volumes. Nor
shall the school be judged solely on the basis of simplistic output
measures; it has been found time and again that schools which produce
the brightest graduates are those which began with the brightest incoming
classes.

The decision of the coordinating council should be based on the
following three factors:

1. the degree to which the school followed the outlined procedures
   in a thorough attempt to define its philosophy and goals and
   refine its operating procedures to be more consistent with its
   beliefs;

2. the degree to which the school encouraged and accepted
   community involvement in its accountability procedures; and

3. the responsibility, resources, and training provided the staff
to further their own accountability.

As the above factors indicate, the decision to be made by the

coordinating council should be based not so much on the school's present

status as by its developing skill in and willingness to recognize its

own problem areas and honestly and openly seek their solution.

Step 1:   Written report to the coordinating council

Required: A: At least one month before the formal meeting at

which the application will be considered the school should

make available one copy of each of the following documents

to each member of the coordinating council:

1. the school philosophy
2. the auditor's report on operationalizing the school
    philosophy
3. the school's reply to the auditor
4. a summary report of the needs assessment including
    a list of the school goals along with their
    perceived importance criterion levels and pupil
    performance levels for those goals on which a
    student assessment was conducted and a brief
    interpretation of the needs assessment
5. a copy of the report compiled by the steering
    committee outlining planned curriculum changes
    and any subsequent assessments of those changes
6. a copy of the school's reaction to the team visit
    and its current plans for change as outlined above
    in the Team Visitation section

B: The forthcoming application to the state should be

publicly announced. The announcement includes procedures for

initiation on the part of the public for the filing of a

minority report. The means of broadcast of the announcement

including news stories, radio and television announcements,

ads and school bulletins should be recorded and forwarded in

a letter to the coordinating council.

C: At least one month before the formal meeting at which the application will be considered, the chairman should submit to the coordinating council copies of the team visitation report.

Optional: A: The school and the chairman may submit any additional information they believe pertinent to the decision.

Step 2: Consideration of the request

Required: A: At an open and previously announced meeting, the state coordinating council should consider the application of the school for certification as accountable.

B: Each of the following individuals or groups should have the opportunity to make presentations to the coordinating council: the school staff, the auditor, the SEA liaison staff and community members wishing to file a minority report. As part of its operating procedures, the coordinating council may determine a time limit for such presentations.

C: In a format chosen by the coordinating council, its members should have an opportunity to address whatever questions it deems appropriate to any of the above-mentioned persons or groups.

D: The certification vote should take place in a closed session of the coordinating council. A school is considered certified as accountable if at least two thirds of the members of the coordinating council vote to approve its application.

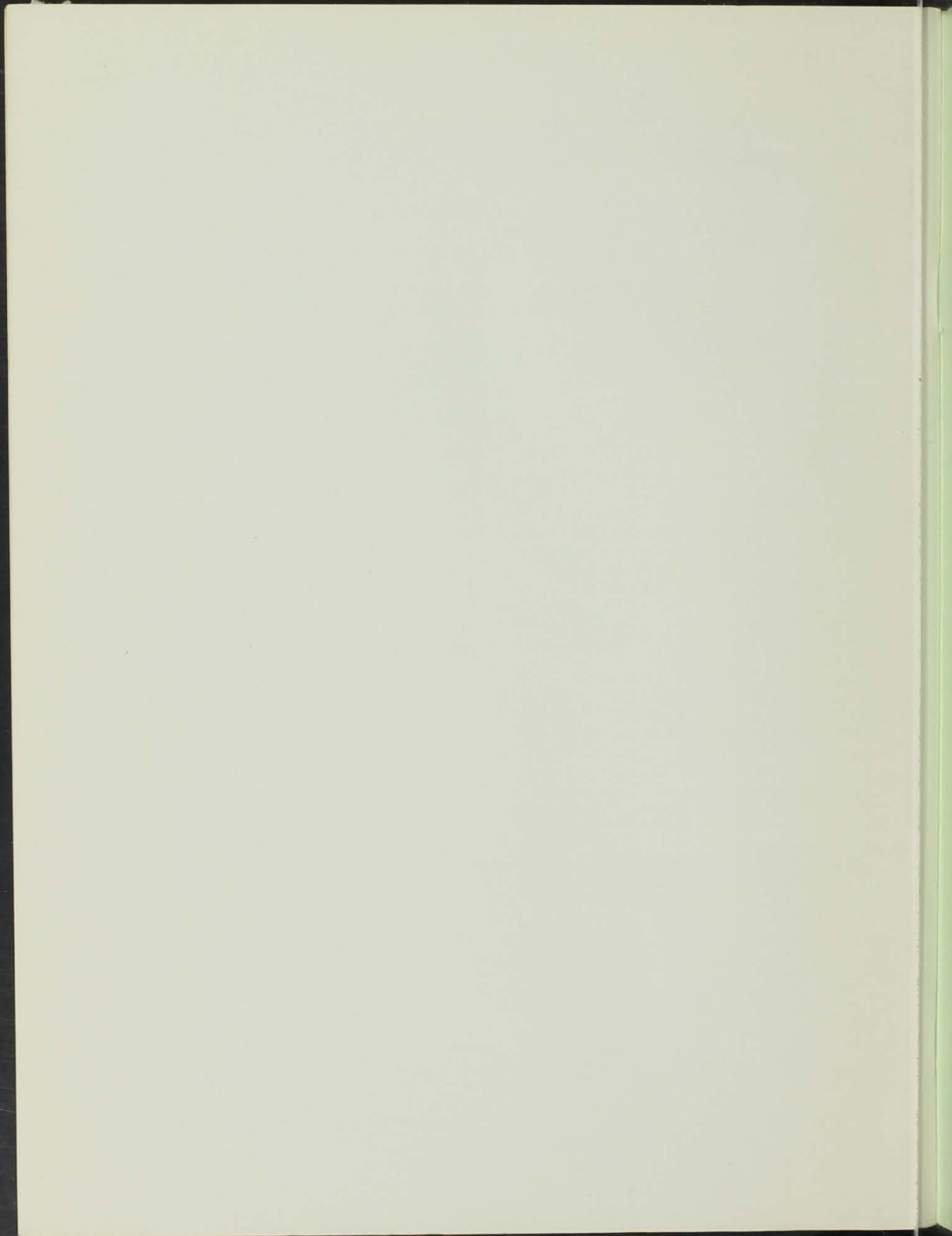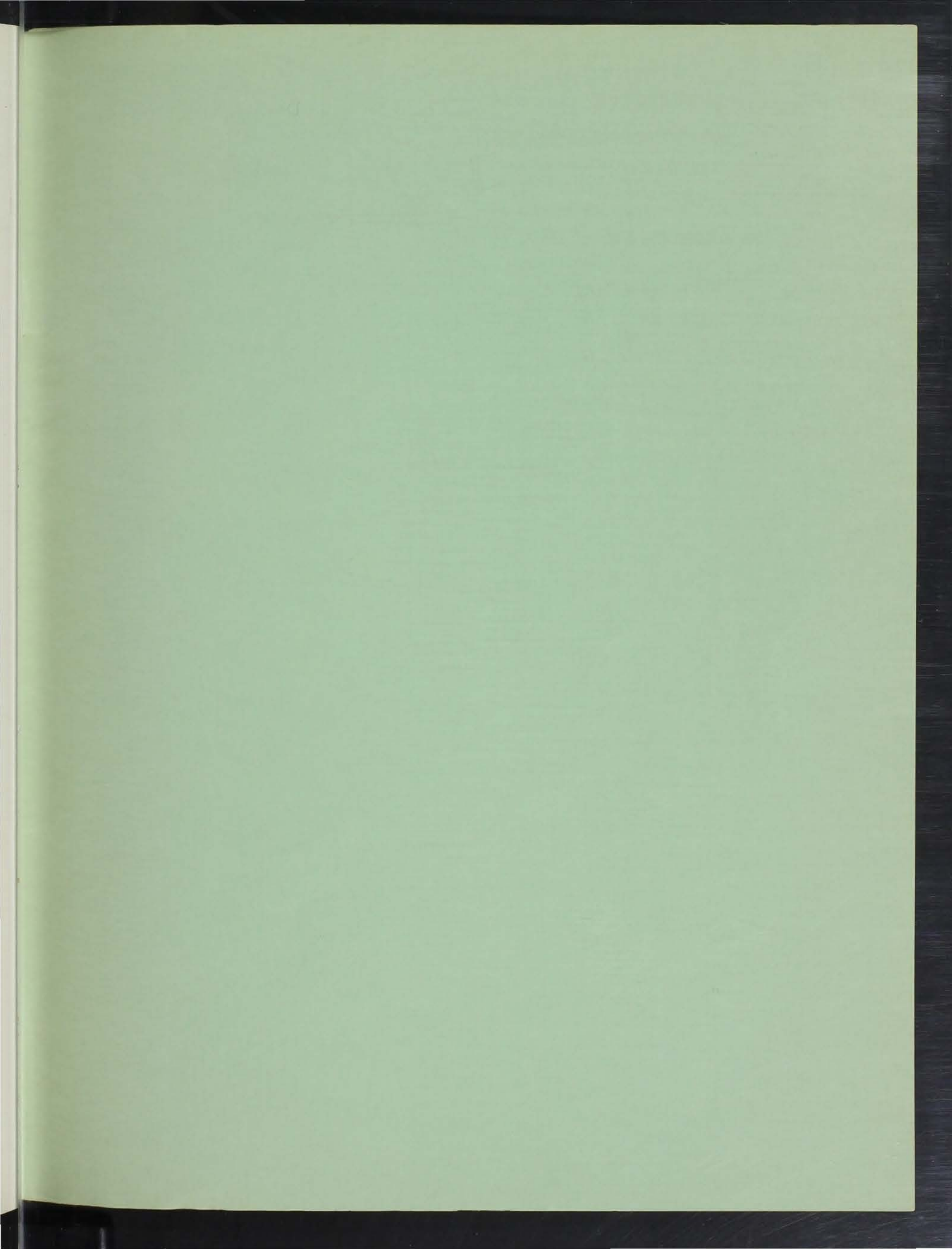| STEP	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY	SEA RESPONSIBILITY	EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITY	AUDITOR RESPONSIBILITY
1. Written report to the SEA Coordinating Council.	1. Make documents available to the SEA from school philosophy study, needs assessment, curriculum revision, and reactions to the team visit. 2. Make public announcement of the presentation to the state; present procedures for filing a minority report. 3. Submit any other relevant information to the SEA (Optional).		1. Provide consultant help in gathering and preparing documents.	1. Submit copies of the team visitation report to the SEA Council. 2. Submit any other relevant material to the SEA (Optional).
2. Consideration of the request.	1. Make formal presentation to the Coordinating Council.	1. Consider request for certificating (coordinating council). 2. Hear presentations from school staff, evaluator, auditor, SEA liaison, and any minority reports. 3. Question any of the above presenters. 4. Vote in closed session; school is certified upon approval by 2/3 of the council members.	1. Make formal presentation to the Coordinating Council.	1. Make formal presentation to the Coordinating Council.

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