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ABSTRACT

This report provides a case study of cooperation between the New Jersey Department of Education and the Model Cities Program to improve State education planning and to restructure grant administration machinery. To assist the project, the Department provided onsite technical assistance to the model cities. According to the report, the Department fulfilled its technical assistance mission by assigning its personnel full time to local communities. Concurrent with its field activities, the Model Cities Project provided back-up support to the Department and engaged in planning to secure additional resources for Model Cities. The project also assisted the Department in planning for the administration of federal funds. (JF)

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**THE MODEL CITIES PROJECT
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
IN NEW JERSEY**

Report of a Study
Sponsored by
The New Jersey Department of Education
and the Project,

Improving State Leadership in Education



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Introduction

How the Department of Education has proceeded to carry out the challenging task of providing technical and financial resources to the hard-pressed Model Cities in New Jersey is the fascinating story told in the case study that follows.

The Model Cities Project was established, under contract with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, in the Department's Division of Research, Planning and Evaluation in June, 1969. Since that time the Project has had substantial effects, not only on the quality of plans for educational change in inner-cities, but also on the Department of Education itself. The Model Cities Project has become an important part of the Department's urban strategy.

The Project's field staff, deployed full-time in the several Model Cities, has given the Department an unprecedented outreach capacity. The Project's field staff has played an active role in bringing together local education agencies and neighborhood residents in a concerted effort to improve urban education. Through these field activities, the Department has gained greater insight into the educational needs of inner-city residents and unprecedented contact for purposes of coordination with other agencies at federal, state, and local levels.

The Model Cities Project's inside staff of education planners conducted a study of Department procedures and has made recommendations for the streamlining of Department operations, coordination of planning activities and the concentration on urban priorities in funding allocations. The effect has been to give the Department greater awareness of its flexibility in meeting the needs of urban education: flexibility useful in meeting other priorities as well.

The Department has not condescended to lend technical assistance to Model Cities but has tried to seize upon the opportunity presented by the Model Cities legislation to set its own house in order, to match its regulatory functions with a corresponding concern for technical services and financial support and to exercise leadership in urban education.

The case study should be of considerable interest to State Departments of Education that wish to extend their outreach capacity, streamline their grants management machinery and effect constructive educational change in Model Cities and other depressed urban areas.

Carl L. Marburger
Commissioner of Education
New Jersey

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Section One

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Model Cities is an omnibus urban program whose broad purpose is to improve the "quality of life" in blighted neighborhoods of federally designated cities. It is not a brick and mortar program of physical renewal, but a bold five-year experiment to concentrate private and public resources on the severe social and environmental problems of the so-called Model Neighborhoods in the approximately 150 participating cities. Model Cities seeks no less than community revitalization. Since education lies at the heart of durable and significant social changes, *Model Cities merits the special attention of educators at all levels.*

In September, 1969 the New Jersey Department of Education became involved in the Model Cities Program out of a recognition of its long-term potential for educational change in depressed urban areas of New Jersey.

Department participation requires a word of explanation. Anyone familiar with the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966, which authorizes the Model Cities Program, knows that states are given only fleeting reference in the legislation; that this direct federal-local program is administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); that no state agency has jurisdiction over Model Cities, let alone a department of education; that a new agency called a City Demonstration Agency (CDA) established as an arm of the Mayor's office has primary responsibility for Model Cities; that these CDAs, not school systems, are direct recipients of HUD funds; and that education has no earmarked share of HUD supplemental or action funds. What then, it is fair to ask, is a State Department of Education doing in the thick of Model Cities activities?

A deeper examination of the legislation and guidelines discloses several incentives to Department of Education's participation. The nine participating cities in New Jersey--Newark, Trenton, East Orange, Hoboken, Atlantic City, Perth Amboy; Jersey City, Plainfield, and Paterson--have a special claim on Department attention as urban areas of severe need. Model Cities lays stress on urban change, innovation, and new mechanisms of coordination. It is an inter-agency effort in which Health, Education, and Welfare and other federal agencies actively participate. It operates on a strategy of concentration of resources, rather than spreading thin limited resources. It offers lead time to plan. It boasts substantial citizen participation in an orderly planning process. But granted that the Model Cities Program exhibits several attractive features, the role of a Department of Education remains to be explained. A brief account of the mechanics of the program may indicate key junctures for such intervention.

To direct the local program, a City Demonstration Agency (CDA) is established as an arm of municipal government to develop with neighborhood residents and local officials a comprehensive plan under a grant from HUD. Ordinarily the initial plan consists of a problem analysis, a statement of goals, a ranking of priorities within an agreed-upon strategy, some projections over

time and a sheaf of proposals, budgets for projects to be undertaken in the first action year. The comprehensive plan, addressing a spectrum of needs from education to housing, is generally a full year's labor for CDA and the residents involved in the planning process. When transmitted by the city fathers, reviewed by federal agencies and approved by HUD, the plan triggers supplemental or action funds to the city for the conduct of acceptable projects. The CDA, which is a planning and monitoring agency--not an operating agency--then negotiates contracts with delegate agencies to carry out the various projects, relying for the most part on the public school system for elementary and secondary education activities unless it is demonstrably unable or unwilling to participate.

The Model Cities Program, which has been hailed as a forerunner of block grants because of its relative freedom from federal dictation and restrictive guidelines, has the defects of its virtues, as the saying is. It tends to reserve to local decision ticklish matters of priority allocation, program design and third-party contracting--which often requires hard bargaining among CDA staff, government officials, neighborhood residents and professionals for their resolution. It also may be true that local officials have been so inured to categorical programming that the lifting of constraints sometimes reveals a dearth of creative ideas. Education in Model Cities is not limited to remedial or compensatory programs. Its openendedness is its great promise, provided communities have the imagination for it. In addition, there runs through Model Cities literature another recurrent theme: CDAs are expected to identify legal, regulatory, and other impediments to change and seek means of removing them. CDAs also are constantly searching for sources of financial aid beyond the HUD supplemental funds to underwrite planned improvements. It is obvious that *Model Cities cannot succeed without the cooperation and support of state agencies* in these efforts, particularly since federal education funds are increasingly shifting to state administration.

The New Jersey Department of Education entered into contract with HUD in June, 1969 to conduct a special pilot project to define a role for state education agencies in the Model Cities. The two-fold purpose was to provide technical and, to the extent possible, financial assistance. But more specifically, the project sought to: (1) bring school systems more fully into the Model Cities process; (2) to mediate differences should they arise; (3) to serve as a source of program ideas and practical suggestions; (4) to help develop with residents and professionals strong educational projects and proposals; (5) to identify sources of financial assistance for these projects; (6) to build local capability; (7) to facilitate negotiations with educational agencies; and (8) to improve communications between the Department of Education and these inner-city neighborhoods.

These objectives emerged from a period of exploration and reconnaissance in the Model Neighborhood in Trenton and reflect what Model Cities required of the Department. But there is nothing altruistic in this Model Cities Project. The Project's mission is fully consistent with the Department's view of itself. Public schools would more likely participate in Model Cities with department leadership and example. The Department would gain from the experience an increased sensitivity to urban problems, develop a reality base for its own planning, and earn a reputation for service. *Model Cities represented to the Department an opportunity to examine its role in the urban centers.* The critical literature on Departments of Education makes much of their insularity,

their preoccupation with regulatory functions at the expense of service, their lack of effective planning, their non-urban orientation, and their tendency toward in-breeding by attracting to their ranks professional educators monotonously similar in background and experience. Put another way, it is not obvious from an examination of Departments of Education--the kinds of people they hire, the goals they set, and the way in which their resources are allocated--that *there is a crisis in urban education.*

The Model Cities Project sought help in recruiting a racially integrated staff with urban education and community development experience--turning to the Peace Corps, the Institute for Community Studies in New York, the Ford Foundation, and to others for leads and recommendations. These sources, off the well-worn track of state personnel offices, produced a remarkably diverse staff as much at home in storefronts and church basements of the Model Neighborhoods as in superintendents' offices. While all had been teachers, their other work experiences had been richly varied. One had been executive director of the East Harlem Block Schools and a national consultant to Head Start Follow-Through. Another had been a union organizer, educational program developer in Philadelphia ghettos and member of the Temple University staff. Still another had been a street worker in a juvenile delinquency prevention project in Harlem and a teacher of adult education. The staff member whose mid-town case study appears later in this paper signed on as a virtually full-time intern from Teachers College, Columbia University, after teaching, counseling and administrative experiences and a two-year stint with the Peace Corps in Turkey. These persons represented an *outreach staff for the Department to the inner-cities where talent, open attitudes, and industriousness would overcome residual doubts and suspicions.* After all there was no reason to expect rejoicing in the ghettos over this department intervention. On the contrary, one could expect residents to wonder where the Department had been all these years, whether the Department was not merely an apologist for school systems and what technical assistance might mean beyond a new set of guidelines. *If the Model Cities Project was to be welcomed in the cities, it would be because of the kinds of professionals assigned to this helping task.* Another important factor in preparing the way was Commissioner of Education Marburger's reputation as a leader concerned for the cities. The Model Cities Project was a part of a broader urban strategy that the Commissioner had already set in motion.

The Model Cities Project had assumed two major responsibilities of which outreach technical assistance was one. The other was an attempt to secure funding for these urban districts and bring about a department-wide commitment. A Coordinating Council for Model Cities was established in the Department as a vehicle of communication and coordination of department planning and programming affecting the Model Cities. In addition, a major analysis of department plans, procedures and fund allocations was undertaken by the Project's educational planners. This was more than a treasure hunt; it was a kind of departmental self-study designed to ascertain how the Department as a whole could realign itself to urban districts. To the Model Cities it would signify the department's willingness to change itself. The Model Cities Project would have an impact on the Department as well as the cities. The Model Cities Project was not to be missionary work.

Section Two

DESIGN AND RATIONALE

Provide direct staff assistance to the New Jersey Model Cities in the Model Cities planning process as related to education. This involves helping the Model Cities to analyze their education needs and overcoming the problems and to develop strategies and approaches for reaching the goals. (From HUD contract)

Needs

During the first year of federally supported Model Cities planning in New Jersey (FY69), the State Department of Education was minimally involved in the Model Cities Program, mainly through participation in the State Model Cities inter-departmental group coordinated by the State Department of Community Affairs, and through the participation of the Project Coordinator, then Assistant Director of Planning, in the deliberations of the Trenton Model Cities education planning task force. As a result, an analysis of the major problems in Model Cities education planning was prepared and a specific set of objectives established, based on the kind of assistance desired from the Department of Education. These objectives emerged:

- To improve the working relationship between Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and City Demonstration Agencies (CDAs).
- To improve the quality of education planning, including both the final plan and the process of planning.
- To increase the flow of grant-in-aid funds in the area of education from all sources--state and federal, public and private--having an impact on Model Neighborhood residents in New Jersey.

Strategies

To fulfill these objectives the Model Cities Project faced two major strategic questions:

1. What would be the most effective method of providing direct technical assistance to the Model Cities?
2. What would be the most effective method of increasing the flow of grant-in-aid funds to the Model Cities?

In order to provide effective technical assistance to the Model Cities, a field consultant model was designed in which an education planning specialist was assigned from the State Education Agency to work full-time in each CDA.

The Education Planning Specialists were given these major responsibilities:

- Assist the City Demonstration Agency in the development and writing of the education component of the Model Cities Comprehensive Plan;

- Advise the CDA on current innovations and successful practices in education that related to the problem analysis;
- Identify funding sources for education projects and assist the CDA in the preparation of applications for them;
- Facilitate communication and cooperation between the local superintendent of schools, the local board of education, and the CDA;
- Facilitate the involvement of teachers, students, administrators, and Model Neighborhood residents in the education planning process; and
- Assist the CDA in negotiations with Federal, State, and local education agencies.

At the same time, a central department-based support staff was established to provide to the field consultant information on funding sources and innovative projects and answers to specific questions on education practices and Model Cities planning. In addition to the back-up support provided to the field staff, two in-house educational planners would analyze state plans with the purpose of developing strategies for:

- Removing unnecessary state and local impediments, both regulatory and financial, to implementing Model Cities education plans;
- Making the requirements of state plans pertinent to the needs of Model Cities; and
- Facilitating the flow of New Jersey state education funds into Model Cities.

A Co-ordinating Council, composed of Department Specialists in such areas as federal funding, school lunch programs, vocational, bilingual, and early childhood education, was formed to:

1. Review and comment on Model Cities education plans and proposals;
2. Brief Model Cities on relevant state department of education activities; and
3. Provide special technical assistance to CDAs where required.

Rationale

The Model Cities Project strategies were designed to meet the three major problems encountered in Model Cities education planning. *First*, the relationship between an essentially non-education agency, the CDA, and the local education agency (LEA) was often strained. The problems in one community reached a climax when the superintendent of schools at a federal inter-agency review session on the completed Model Cities Plan, charged that the public schools had not been involved in the development of First Year Action Projects and that he wanted no part of the education section of the Plan.

In addition to inter-agency problems, there are a number of conditions peculiar to the LEA-CDA relationship that tend to undermine the development of an effective relationship between them. One major factor is the differences in their constituencies, and therefore in their program priorities: the school system must relate to the entire local community, while the Model Cities Agency is responsible only to the Model Neighborhood. *Public schools in this country have successfully insulated themselves against "outside" pressures while Model Cities Agencies are committed to widespread and meaningful citizen involvement in all aspects of their program.* This difference in constituency can be especially painful when the majority community to which the public school system tends to respond is different racially and culturally from the minority community located in the Model Neighborhood, a situation present in most New Jersey Model Cities.

Yet the heart of the Model Cities Program is the negotiation between the Model Cities Agency (together with its citizen participation group) and existing service agencies to determine priority programs. There are, however, a number of additional factors mitigating the development of a workable negotiating relationship between LEAs and CDAs. For example:

- HUD planning guidelines for the "problem analysis" section of the Model Cities Plan yield a fairly one-sided description of the weaknesses and failures of the public school system, which can lead to a defensive, negative reaction to the Model Cities Agency by school officials.
- Most public school systems in New Jersey Model Cities did not develop a good working relationship with the Community Action Agencies and CDAs were often viewed by school officials as just another anti-poverty agency seeking to usurp the prerogatives of the school system.
- Most school systems in New Jersey, even in the larger cities, have small central staffs with little or no planning capacity. What staff is available is often forced to respond to daily crises. Many school officials viewed the Model Cities Program as another housing program designed to rebuild the inner-city areas and not as a comprehensive, social and physical planning activity.

At the same time, however, *education was selected as a high priority problem area by most Model Cities Agencies, working in concert with citizens from the Model Neighborhood, and approximately 25% of the Model Cities supplemental funds available was set aside for conduct of projects in the area of education.* It is possible, of course, to design an education component that focuses on the needs of pre-school children and adults, thereby avoiding all contact with the public school system, but most Model Cities Agencies recognized the need to deal in some fashion with the problems faced by Model Neighborhood youth attending the public schools. The quality of the relationship between the Model Cities Agency and public school officials therefore is vital to effective implementation of Model Cities-financed projects operated by local boards of education. This relationship was viewed as one that the presence of an on-site field consultant backed by the State could help to improve.

Second, experience in New Jersey during FY69 also indicated that there was a great need for improvement in the quality of education planning--both in the final product or plan--and the process by which the plan was developed. In some cases, there was little or no analysis of problems or strategy

to carry out stated objectives, and in others, First Year Action Projects were sketchy, not innovative, and unrelated to the problem analysis. The education planning process often failed to involve effectively school officials and other education professionals, as well as Model Neighborhood citizens.

The small size of the HUD planning grants for initial staffing compared to the job required by HUD planning guidelines, and the low salary scales of local government compared to those of State and Federal Government and private industry, resulted in the hiring of young, relatively inexperienced planners in most Model Cities Agencies. The job of "Model Cities Planning Specialist" was a new and undefined vocation and a reservoir of competent, experienced planners in this field did not exist. And the immensity of the job--coordinating with agencies at the local, county, state, regional and federal levels, developing a relationship with Model Neighborhood residents and various professionals--often did not allow time for extensive research into innovative approaches to Model Neighborhood problems. The lack of technical expertise in the area of educational programming, then, was identified as an important factor in determining the quality of education planning in New Jersey Model Cities.

A *third* major problem confronting the local Model Cities efforts across the State was (and is) the lack of sufficient resources to meet adequately the problems identified through the planning process. Federal and State grant-in-aid funds utilized by these cities, for example, often were focused on problems or clients outside of the Model Neighborhood, or were administered in such a way as to have very little positive impact upon the Model Neighborhood. Easily digestible information about Federal and State grants was not available and the immense demands on the small CDA planning staff did not allow time for extensive excursions to State and Federal offices to identify sources of funds. In addition, HUD officials sometimes urged local Model Cities Agencies to plan only for the expenditure of Model Cities supplemental funds and not for categorical grants-in-aid, thereby weakening the concept of Model Cities funds as "seed money" designed to bring a host of Federal and State grants into a particular neighborhood. In order to increase the flow of funds, the Department identified the need for more effective provision of information about grant-in-aid funds to Model Cities planners and the need for strengthening the grantsmanship of Model Cities planners.

In conclusion, an analysis of the major problems of Model Cities education planning was made. It was found that the major needs of the Model Cities were to: (1) strengthen CDA-LEA relations; (2) improve the quality of education planning within the CDA; and (3) increase the flow of funds from the SEA to the Model Neighborhood education programs. *Department field consultants, or Education Planning Specialists, were deployed in the New Jersey Model Cities. The Model Cities Project's in-house staff focused on providing back-up support to the field staff and analyzing state plans in order to facilitate the flow of funds to Model Cities education programs. The Co-ordinating Council members reviewed, on demand, those Model Cities plans and proposals pertinent to their specific fields and provided special technical assistance to CDAs when requested.*

Section Three

ROLE OF THE EDUCATION PLANNING SPECIALIST: A SPECIAL MIDTOWN CASE STUDY

The role of the Education Planning Specialist is complicated by the fact that he is a state consultant, assigned to the local CDA to bring the technical and financial resources of the State Education Agency to the Model Neighborhood. In fulfilling this task he must interact, not only with City Demonstration Agency staff, but with the local education agency, Model Neighborhood residents, HUD representatives and many other federal, state, local and private agencies. Where conflicts of interest exist, as they will among these various groups, he must resolve them. Where gaps in communication exist, he must fill them. It is the aim of the Educational Planning Specialist to maximize the cooperation and coordination of these different agencies in order to realize the goals of the Model Neighborhood education programs.

Not only is the assignment of a state person on a full-time basis in the community without precedent, but the direct contact between the Department of Education and a non-school agency is itself an innovation. As a State consultant, however, the Education Planning Specialist has two advantages. *First*, citizens view his opinions differently from those of, for example, CDA staff because, as a "State" man, he is detached from the local agencies. *Secondly*, he is closer to the source of funds and potentially valuable as an advocate for the city in the decision-making councils of the Department.

Therefore, in carrying out his duties most effectively, *the Education Planning Specialist must preserve his neutrality in the face of local pressures and conflicts. Furthermore, he must bring his educational expertise to the Model Neighborhood but not usurp decision-making functions.* To bring the LEA, CDA, Education Task Force and other agencies together to develop a meaningful program, the Education Planning Specialist must project the image of an "advisor", but use his status and skills to establish and maintain cooperation. Since he is without authority, he must rely on his professional know-how.

The following case study tells a more detailed story of an Education Planning Specialist, his role, his problems, and his accomplishments. The case study is based on the experiences of one of the Project's Education Planning Specialists in a Model City which shall be called "Midtown."

The Midtown case is typical in that its problems of inter-agency relations, program development and first time planning cut across all the Model Cities. It is atypical in that the CDA-LEA relations were unusually strained, the city is much smaller than other Model Cities and there is no large bureaucracy with which the Education Planning Specialist had to deal. Its size highlights the issues. This case study should be viewed as a chapter in a book--much had occurred before the arrival of the Education Planning Specialist and much has happened since this case study was written.

The Education Planning Specialist

Midtown is an old city and has some 45,000 inhabitants. Approximately one-third of the population is Puerto Rican. These basic facts are generally illustrative of the setting in which the Education Planning Specialist works.

The Midtown Model Cities Agency was about one year old when the Project's Education Planning Specialist arrived on the scene. A completed comprehensive plan was undergoing revisions according to federal suggestions. From the outset of the Project, he was called a Model Cities Education Planning Specialist because planning was conceived as central to his role. The planning process is central to Model Cities--a process through which community and school hammer out priorities and weld them into a strategy for action. This process necessitated developing tactics to ensure an effective working relationship between the local CDA staff and the superintendent of schools and to ensure meaningful citizen participation in the Model Cities planning process. Other objectives included exploiting technical and fiscal resources available to both the CDA and the LEA from state and federal sources which, without special attention, might go unnoticed by the agencies. Under the guidance of the Education Planning Specialist, then, resources were to be found and used specifically to improve the quality of the CDA's education program planning, implementation, and evaluation processes.

The Education Planning Specialist was placed in the Midtown CDA office where, by a Memorandum of Agreement, he worked under the day-to-day supervision of the City Demonstration Agency Director. The State Department of Education Project Coordinator, in the Memorandum of Agreement, described the responsibilities of the Planning Specialist to the CDA Director as assisting the CDA staff in the writing of education components, advising the CDA staff on current successful innovations, locating new funding sources, and facilitating communication between the local superintendent's office and CDA staff. To facilitate his job, the CDA agreed to provide the necessary office space, telephone and secretarial help as they would for regular members of their staff.

Before beginning work in Midtown, the Education Planning Specialist had been introduced to the local superintendent of schools as an employee of the New Jersey Department of Education. The superintendent was told that the Education Planning Specialist would help coordinate education programs between the LEA and the CDA. The superintendent, while not a signatory to the Memorandum of Agreement, was expected to be supportive of both the man and his mission.

The placement of a State Department of Education employee at the local level is unique when compared to normal SEA operations. The SEA usually only provided consultants upon request. This placement produced several conflicting expectations from both the LEA and the CDA.

The LEA generally assumed that the Education Planning Specialist was an "information expert" on who ran particular programs, or more important, who controlled the money for specific projects. It was quite clear to the LEA

tha. "education planning", in the context of "specialist" from the SEA, was closely related to grantsmanship--the ability to write and get education proposals funded.

The superintendent of schools expected the Education Planning Specialist, as an employee of the State Department of Education, to interpret the role of the public schools to the Model Cities Agency. This was particularly interesting because it implied that the CDA did not understand public schools and because it placed the Planning Specialist in the position of ally and interpreter. He was called upon to explain, and in some cases to defend, public school practices to CDA staff members who frequently found those practices inexplicable and indefensible. The Education Planning Specialist, then, had to maintain a delicate balance, for to become too vigorous in his "interpretation" would jeopardize his credibility in the CDA, and to be hypercritical of the local public schools would raise questions of his integrity in the view of the superintendent.

The Midtown CDA had very similar expectations of the Education Planning Specialist. There was the general expectation of information about projects and money that would be useful to the agency. As a CDA staff member, the Education Planning Specialist was engaged during his first few months in Midtown with writing education project descriptions that would be logically consistent with the overall goal of the CDA and that would also be educationally sound.

Since the Education Planning Specialist had his office in the CDA and was, in fact, considered an agency staff member, he was expected to interpret and, at times, to defend Model Cities education decisions, especially to the public and to the LEA. In this sense he was a Model Cities advocate. This was particularly difficult in the area of controversial programs such as Street Academies. Nevertheless, the field staff member had to try to deal with that role without sacrificing his personal or professional integrity.

There were also the expectations of citizens. During his first week in the agency, the Planning Specialist was introduced to the Midtown Education Task Force which consisted of Model Neighborhood residents. The CDA Director announced that the Planning Specialist was a Department of Education employee who would help the Task Force develop its new education plan. (Part of the old one had been rejected by HUD.) Task Force citizens, then, assumed that the Planning Specialist would in fact help write new project descriptions and, more important, would be able to negotiate the projects with the LEA and other delegate agencies.

The expectations for the Education Planning Specialist, both on the part of the LEA and the CDA, were reasonably accurate reflections of needs. Placing a State Department of Education employee at the local level and in an extra-educational agency crystallized the needs of both the LEA and the CDA for general information about technical assistance, education programs and available dollars; it accentuated the need for logical and coherent planning; and it surfaced the need for inter-agency cooperation--the need for the LEA and CDA to talk with each other in order to discover on what issues they could agree.

Ambiguities and Conflicts

There are several conflicts and ambiguities inherent in any relationship between a CDA and an LEA. Midtown was no exception. The bases of these conflicts and ambiguities can be dichotomized for the sake of discussion. On the one hand there was an established institution, the LEA, with its goals and priorities. In Midtown, the schools have serviced the educational needs of the community for over seventy years. On the other hand the CDA, with its own set of goals and priorities, was the insurgent agency. Indeed, the CDA brings with it the promise of something new and dynamic; and with this promise there is an implicit criticism of what has gone on in the past. *Model Cities is predicated on the idea that there are serious problems in the city and in the schools, and that there is a need for a new agency to help coordinate and re-focus the resources of many different agencies to solve the problems.* (The LEA does not deny the problems; it does question the accusation that LEAs are responsible, or in some way caused the problems.) The first step in this new coordinating process is to determine what the problems are. In Midtown the problem analysis revealed that over half the children in the Model Neighborhood were reading below grade level and intimated (data were scarce) that there was a severe dropout problem, especially among Puerto Ricans, even before the children reached high school. It also indicated that the school facilities were deteriorating; most of the elementary schools were over fifty years old and overcrowded. Less than thirty percent (30%) of the students who graduated from Midtown High said they planned to go on to college. Although the original problem analysis did not discuss it, there also was a staff problem. Most of the teachers were older and were themselves products of the Midtown schools. There was very little teacher turnover. The few positions that did become available were filled by local people. The result of the closed-staff policy could be professional stagnation. Ideas from the outside might have a difficult time penetrating the LEA. The Model Cities' problem analysis indicated that there were not very many things right with the Midtown schools.

At the end of the first year of planning, and prior to the Education Planning Specialist's arrival, Midtown's Model Cities education plan was reviewed by HUD. At a HUD-city meeting, the superintendent of schools attacked the CDA for misrepresenting the schools in the problem analysis. He claimed that facts and figures were inaccurate and were cited deliberately to put the local schools in a bad light. He also accused the CDA of attempting to establish alternative education systems in the city without consulting or cooperating with the local board of education. He charged that he had rarely been invited to planning meetings nor had he been involved in any significant way in the decision-making process concerned with education. He concluded by saying that he would have difficulty supporting the CDA programs.

The CDA counter claimed that the LEA was unwilling to cooperate and ignored the CDA. Regardless of the relative merits of these charges and counter charges, it was clear that there had been mistakes on both sides. The result was that by the end of the HUD-city meeting and at the start of the CDA's second year, the two agencies were polarized.

There were pressures on the agencies to depolarize. The CDA is an arm of the Mayor and as such is subject to his priorities. Midtown Model Cities represented over two million dollars of new money for the city. This meant new projects and new jobs for a community that was critically short of both. HUD also requires that the local CDA cooperate with existing agencies, especially the schools.

The local board of education is appointed by the Mayor and it is well known that the board is generally responsive (although not absolutely) to the Mayor's requests. The LEA was also interested in tapping some of the Model Cities resources if it could do so without loss of its traditional power. Therefore, *one of the primary objectives for the Education Planning Specialist was to function as a third-party mediator and to establish a working relationship between the two agencies.*

Dynamics of Model Cities Planning

From the beginning, the Midtown Model Cities Agency had a difficult time with planning. When the city was first given its planning grant, the Mayor hired a Director, remarkably enough a man who was not a resident of the city, to start the initial planning phase. For reasons that are not altogether clear, the CDA Director did not immediately hire a complete staff which would ordinarily have been necessary to develop a comprehensive first-year plan. There were just four people including the Director himself. The major portion of the actual plan was done by outside consultants, none of whom had had much experience with education.

A consulting firm conducted a survey of the population; they collected data about income level, types of jobs, education level of heads of household, future plans, and level of satisfaction with various city agencies that served the community. Based on the results of these data, plus some information from the agencies themselves, a first-year action plan was written and presented to HUD.

Federal and state reactions to the Midtown Model Cities education plan were generally unsatisfactory. Some twenty-six education projects were proposed, but as many critics pointed out, there was little justification given for the projects. Representatives from the regional U. S. Office of Education and from the State Department of Education criticized the plan for having a "shopping list" which attempted to include everything that might sound good. There were too many projects and few had been carefully planned. The superintendent of schools called the plan "pie-in-the-sky" planning which may account for the very weak support the LEA gave the original plan.

There were other problems too. As the list of projects grew during the planning process, the LEA was automatically considered as the operating agency. Yet the superintendent charged that he was not involved in much of the planning and stated that he was not willing to give strong endorsement to the plan. (It should be noted here that there is a possibility that the superintendent shied away from CDA planning, rather than being excluded by design or oversight. He might have thought of the CDA as another set of complex relationships which, for any number of reasons, he would not want to pursue.) However, a strong argument can be made for designing a planning process that would be impossible for the LEA to ignore. This would have been feasible, especially with the help from the Mayor. However, this was not done. When the Education Planning Specialist arrived in the fall of 1969, he found a disjointed CDA education plan and a very suspicious local superintendent of schools.

Game Plan

In order to facilitate his day-to-day responsibilities, the Midtown Education Planning Specialist developed a "game plan" which essentially identified

the initial conditions as he found them, set forth his goals, and outlined a strategy for fulfilling the goals.

Basically, the initial conditions fell into six categories:

1. *The CDA was in flux* and the Director had just received permission from the Mayor to increase his staff. New people were coming into the CDA every day and no provisions had been made for their orientation. Files were difficult to find. There were not enough telephones. As new people came into the office, they were assigned tasks of re-writing proposals based on the criticisms that had come from the Regional Interagency Coordinating Council (RICC). There was excitement and confusion.
2. *The education projects were disjointed.* The original list of twenty-six projects had been reduced to six projects, but there was little evidence of cohesiveness to the projects. The problem analysis on which the projects were supposedly based was weak, consisting of two pages of generalities. There was no focus to the plan, few objectives and no strategy.
3. *There was a poor, almost nonexistent, relationship between the CDA and the LEA.* The superintendent was unwilling to support most of the projects in which the local board of education had been named as operating agency. Beyond the superintendent and his staff, very few building level staff knew anything about the Model Cities education program.
4. *Like the board of education, very few other agencies that had been named in the plan as operating agencies had had more than a perfunctory contact with the CDA.* By and large, the education projects were underdeveloped and were not systematically negotiated with the potential operating agencies.
5. *There was no widespread citizen participation in the education planning process;* the few citizens involved were not representative of the community. For example, few, if any, Spanish-speaking residents were active on the Education Task Force.
6. *The Midtown School District had very few resources it could contribute to the CDA.* The district had a very difficult time supporting its own programs. In New Jersey the state-wide average of the Equalized Valuation Per Pupil (EVPP) is \$34,282, but of the twelve cities in Wessess County, Midtown has the least amount of dollars behind each pupil--\$17,800, approximately one-half the state-wide average. The state-wide perspective is worse. There are some 575 school districts in New Jersey and only 35 of them have a lower EVPP than Midtown's. Midtown is near the bottom of the dollar pile for education. When asked to help contribute personnel or space for CDA programs, the superintendent was reluctant partly because of the limited capabilities of the district.

There were five general goals that the Education Planning Specialist saw as guiding his work responsibilities. These were:

- To help develop an education program plan that would focus on specific problems and would in a coherent way relate to the overall goals of the first action year plan;
- To help develop a working relationship between the CDA and the LEA;
- To help develop and to encourage more citizen participation in the education planning process (both Model Neighborhood residents and school professionals);
- To contribute to a new problem analysis for the CDA Education Plan; and
- To expand the range of possible fiscal and programmatic resources for both the LEA and the CDA.

In order to fulfill the game plan goals, the Planning Specialist developed a strategy which had three basic steps. The *first step* was to help the agency develop descriptions and an educational rationale that would be acceptable to HUD, CDA, Model Neighborhood residents, and the local board of education. This meant allocating resources for some education projects that would complement services already offered in the schools while also providing projects that could have a strong community identity. In Midtown's case, two projects, a counseling program and a teacher-training program, were written with the LEA as the delegate agency. Two more projects, a street academy for dropouts and a cooperative nursery, were designed to have a strong community base and to deal with problems that the LEA had neither the resources nor the expertise to handle.

Another project, a college outreach program, was designed to include the local college, which had previously remained aloof from the rest of the community. Here, students from the Model Neighborhood would have the opportunity to increase their skills in mathematics and science-related subjects. Finally, the Planning Specialist helped to write a scholarship program description that would provide the necessary funds for the first year of college for selected needy Model Neighborhood students.

The *next step* was to establish a working relationship with the local school district. Essentially, the Planning Specialist suggested that he, the CDA Education Coordinator, and her assistant visit all the schools that serviced Model Neighborhood children to talk with principals, teachers, and students.

The Planning Specialist arranged a series of meetings at five schools. The Model Cities team met with the principals, visited classrooms, and spoke with teachers at faculty meetings. The members of the team answered questions about Model Cities and asked questions about the local problems in the school. The meetings went very well and the superintendent asked the Planning Specialist and the Education Coordinator to attend Title I advisory meetings. The Planning Specialist was also asked to talk with all the principals at a principals' meeting about Model Cities Programs.

There was another factor that was instrumental in improving the relations between the CDA and the LEA. As mentioned before, the Midtown School District was pressed for resources. The Planning Specialist sought to bring extra dollars to the district by identifying project funds for which the schools

might be eligible. This included a teacher corps program, food money, and a Title III early childhood planning grant. At this time, these projects are in various stages of discussion and represent possible additional resources for the schools.

The results of this type of procedure are very difficult to measure. It does appear that there is a much better working relationship between the two agencies. This does not mean to imply that there is no tension, for indeed there is. However, there is now some indication of mutual respect; how far this will go depends on how the relations are handled in the future.

The *final strategy step* was concerned with the project negotiation process. With the exception of the schools, very few of the other delegate agencies named in the plan had any more than a perfunctory contact with the CDA. The Planning Specialist immediately contacted all the agencies and started a series of meetings to work out the details of the projects. These negotiations were frequently complicated and time-consuming. For example, after five months of discussions with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Street Academy staff, it became apparent that they did not have the necessary funds to do what they said they could. The Planning Specialist urged the CDA Director to accept another agency to implement this program. As of this time, several others are being considered.

The first two project contracts to be signed in the Model Cities Agency have been in education. The negotiation process is on-going. And even while these negotiations are in progress, the Planning Specialist and the Education Coordinator are already beginning to develop the new problem analysis.

There are several very clear results of the Planning Specialist's tenure in Midtown. As previously stated there is a much better working relationship between the LEA and the CDA. But more important, the Planning Specialist has established linkages between the Model Cities agency and the SEA that were non-existent before his arrival. The CDA staff now meets periodically with the Department of Education in-house staff and there is an exchange of information. The Department in-house staff has a strong stake in making Midtown's Model City education plan work, and to this end, they work very hard to find new funds and to provide special technical assistance for the CDA education component. The Education Planning Specialist in Midtown has enhanced the strategic nature of his position and has contributed to the strengthening of the linkage between the CDAs and the SEA throughout the entire State of New Jersey.

On another dimension, the Planning Specialist continually emphasized the need for rational education planning in both the CDA and the LEA. He provided the superintendent of schools and the CDA Director with examples of coherent plans that made sense in Midtown. Moreover, he argued that the school system should develop a central office planning unit that would include professional education planners and actively involve citizens, especially from the Model Neighborhood. In attempting to fulfill this goal, the Planning Specialist brought together the CDA education staff and the superintendent to submit jointly a Title III planning proposal. The proposal was designed to develop a plan for a "nursery through grade three school" in the Model Neighborhood. The important aspect of the proposal was that it provided the money and a reason for the school people and the Model Cities staff, including Model Neighborhood citizens, to sit down and plan together. It is hoped that more

joint planning activities and the implementation of programs will develop from this proposal.

Improving the quality of education planning, including both the final plan and the process of planning, is extremely difficult. Nevertheless, the Planning Specialist who can attend to the many details involved in the process at the local level is fundamental to successful local education planning.

The Midtown case study illustrates in vignette the dynamics of Model Cities and the role of a resourceful state agent. Subsequently, in an interview with the Model Cities Project Coordinator, the Midtown Superintendent stated that the Education Planning Specialist played a valuable role in improving CDA-LEA relationships and the quality of education planning. Both the superintendent and the CDA Director request that the Education Planning Specialist's services continue to be provided by the Department of Education.

Section Four

ANALYSIS OF STATE PLANNING

Concurrent with providing technical assistance in the field was the task of re-orienting the New Jersey Department of Education to provide more funds to Model Cities. This could, it seemed, be done by analyzing the system of allocating federal funds and then, by advocating Model Cities interest at key junctures within it. The complexity of this system and its apparent impenetrability, however, made it evident that the analyses would have to be exhaustive. As most federal grant-in-aid programs require State Plans to assure implementation of regulatory requirements and to explain proposed expenditures, they seemed an excellent place to start. It seemed possible to actually link State and Model Cities planning processes and thereby, to assure an uninterrupted flow of funds to urban areas.

The Model Cities Project's in-house education planners set forth to accomplish the following tasks as specified in the HUD contract:

1. Develop a strategy to remove unnecessary state and local impediments, both regulatory and financial, to implementing Model Cities education plans and document the process employed. This includes an analysis of state education plans with a view toward developing strategies to make their requirements pertinent to the needs of Model Cities; and
2. Develop strategies and a timetable related to facilitating the flow of New Jersey State education funds into Model Neighborhoods.

It was reasoned that State Plans represented the conditions under which grants are made. Not only do they summarize federal and state requirements, they also set forth how the Department will meet them. Even programs that do not have State Plans operate around equivalent guidelines and standards. If, then, State Plans are as important as they seem, merely to seek possible "loopholes" for Model Cities support would be inadequate to assure a continuing flow of funds to urban areas. What was needed was to secure Model Cities designation as a priority in State Plans.

To penetrate the ossified system which produces State Plans, however, it was necessary to open up the whole planning process in the Department, to push for coordinating resources, and, by so doing, tie Model Cities Project integrally into the decision-making structure. Three coordinate strategies were adopted in the Department: (1) to implement a central grants management system; (2) to conduct public educational needs assessment hearings; and (3) to standardize and broaden State Plan development. Each in its own way was intended to formulate and implement a set of departmental priorities, one of which would be through Model Cities Project involvement--the inner-cities.

State Plan analysis* was the exclusive responsibility of the Model Cities Project, the major objects of which were, in order of specificity--

1. To identify provisions in State Plans which obstruct pertinent programs in Model Cities, and press for their change or deletion.
2. To re-work allocation formulas to aid urban-poor areas generally.
3. To find out all relevant information about federal programs: what aid is available for which programs, how the programs are administered, what their capability is, what the timetables and deadlines for application are, what special conditions are imposed upon operation, etc.
4. To discover how the State Plan is developed: who is responsible for its writing, who contributes to its provisions, whether any hearings are held, what stages of review it must pass, etc.
5. To identify areas of State discretion in program administration and to push the Department into taking a more active role in implementing the Commissioner's priorities.
6. To reinterpret federal legislation, regulations, and guidelines in a way more compatible with a Model Cities-urban orientation, and to incorporate this reinterpretation into State Plans.

After a few such analyses were completed, it became clear that the major impediment to funding more programs in Model Cities, or urban areas generally, was the lack of comprehensive planning to meet state needs. As there is no centralized coordination of State Plan development, plans are drawn up independently of one another, each in a specialized office with its own narrow constituency. How decisions are made is not clear, and lines of command are vague. Timetables of application and submission are out of kilter and subject frequently to change. This makes timely intervention in State Plan decisions extremely difficult; all too often an analysis has begun only to find that funds for the following year were already committed.

Applying for funds in such circumstances can be frustrating. Ineligible itself to receive grants, and isolated from direct access to the Department by the LEA, a CDA is hard put to find out what funds are available and how to apply for them. Application deadlines are scattered all over the calendar, and a different administrator must be sought out and cultivated for each program. These problems are not peculiar to New Jersey. Indeed state departments of education mirror in this effort the fragmentation of the categorical grant-in-aid programs as they come from the Congress.

*See Appendix A: Flowchart of State Plan Analysis.

These contingencies further strengthened our resolve to work through State Plan Development. Via the Project, CDA's were able to have the access to, and information about, the programs it needed to influence the LEA. Also, there seemed no other way to discover enough about the administrative/decision-making structure to change it. In any situation where communications are limited, information is at a premium and can be converted into leverage.

Strategy and Recommendations

A long-term approach seemed the best strategy to take. Short-run immediate demands might yield quick results, but their effect would last only as long as the project. The real problem was not the State Plan: intrinsically but the lack of their co-ordinated development. Hence, the push on two fronts: negotiating with the fund administrators on behalf of Model Cities, both in current allocations and in future State Plans, and working with the Commissioner and the Bureau of Grants Management Services to promulgate a set of clear and binding priorities.

How to deal with fund administrators was another problem. The Project's bureaucratic position left a grave deficiency in providing something in return (*quids pro quos*). The first attempt was, therefore, a soft-sell approach, which hoped to persuade, through rational dialogue, program staff to adopt a Model Cities/urban orientation. Perhaps this strategy stemmed from the "exhaust all administrative remedies" theory of change; anyhow, it seemed the least contentious way to begin. As it happened, a small staff and a limited life-span were probably more appropriate to waging surprise attacks than lengthy sieges. Certain attempts to conduct a series of negotiations must have seemed untenable to the fund administrators on the other side of the table.

As it soon became clear that this approach could not produce needed changes, alternatives were formulated. They were:

- *Involve the Commissioner of Education (and sympathetic Assistant Commissioners) to a much greater and more visible extent--through memoranda, meetings, personal calls, etc.--rather than rely merely on his "support."* Not only would this make the Model Cities' position clearer, but it also would place the fund administrator in a trajectory with the line of command;
- *Encourage the Department to hold open hearings on programs and proposals.* The project, which was virtually unknown in the state, could make its findings available to local groups through the CDA's, and by so doing, increase local requests of the Department to change its policies;
- *Press for legislative change of programs* where alteration of State Plans or funding procedures could not reverse a built-in non-urban orientation;
- *Encourage Washington and Regional Offices to use their influence.* This could be done, for example, by pointing out instances of misinterpreted federal requirements, especially in the formulation of "relative need," and by pressing for ear-marked funds to Model Cities; and
- *Work with the central grants monitoring office to build in more points of departmental intervention and required coordination with related offices in State Plan development, and in the project approval process.* Make sure, from the beginning, that there is a Model Cities sign-off in the review stage.

Although the recommendations* to be implemented were specific to certain State Plans, they fell into broad categories, which were consolidated into a single format as follows:

1. *General Communique (Alert):*
A letter sent from the fund administrator to local ESEA and other programs in Model Cities alerting them to the existence of the CDA, and encouraging their mutual cooperation.
2. *State Advisory Council:*
At least one person representative of the poor, or of Model Neighborhoods, seated on the Council (if there is one).
3. *Local Reciprocal Involvement:*
Co-operative planning and program development at the local level between the CDA and the local education agency.
4. *Funding Priority:*
Allocation processes which favor areas where need is concentrated-- such as Model Neighborhoods.
5. *Joint Development (Sign-Off):*
Agreement of CDA to proposals for applications submitted to the Department for funding; or agreement of Project staff to State Plan, or programs approved for Model Cities.
6. *Earmarking:*
Setting aside a specific portion of program funds for Model Cities Projects. This may be in addition to, or instead of, Number 4.
7. *Policy Changes (Miscellaneous)*
More community involvement in local programs, changes in program emphasis or structure and greater state overseeing of local operation.

Findings

As State Plan development is integral to the processes of the Department, the testing of the assumptions or hypotheses about State Plans provided invaluable information about its decision-making structure. These assumptions are:

- *State Plans, in themselves, are almost meaningless.* They are sensible only alongside federal regulations and guidelines, and in any case do not picture program operations. They are not treated as public documents, and do not, therefore, serve the public information function intended for them.
- *Most State Plans do not assess state need, they merely assume it.* Coordinately, federal funds are considered a means of expenditure rather than a resource. *In fact, the State Plan is not a plan at all; it is, rather, a certification of compliance with federal requirements.*

*See Appendix B: Recommendations Made by Model Cities Project.

- . The State Plan sets forth the criteria for eligibility, proper application procedure, and general considerations taken in the approval process. *How approvals are winnowed out and funds allocated is seldom explained.*
- . *State Plans are approved by the USOE, in a manner that varies from routine to rigorous with the administering division, but are not enforced.* Their administration is monitored by the SEA office in which they were written.

These findings cast doubt whether State Plans serve the purposes for which they were intended. They do not cause state planning capability to be developed, as a survey and projection of need has not been mandated, nor has an assessment of total resources in relation to need been required by the federal guidelines. Consequently, cooperation with agencies offering related programs or potentially useful services has not increased. Furthermore, the lack of federal overseeing of State Plans hinders their effectiveness to assure compliance with federal policies and to grant the U.S. Commissioner influence on program administration.

The reasons for these problems can be traced to the Federal level in Washington, D. C. Narrow categorical grant programs encourage the assignment of SEA specialists to master them and administer them, to respond to often tight time-tables for submission of materials to produce the kind of "State Plan" that USOE demands. State administrative funds are seldom adequate to staff an office with the number of professionals that comprehensive planning with broad participation requires. Prohibition on the commingling of funds militates against the combining of staff for common activities.

On the other hand, diversity among programs and their tailoring to state priorities have probably been encouraged. Whether this serves more effectively local needs is open to query. In New Jersey, "state need" tended to be treated as the sum of local needs, and "local need" as an average of "state need." Consequently, only average communities receive services congruent with their problems. Areas of need are further broken down by program, so that projects are parcelled out and conducted entirely independently of one another. Coordinated, concentrated attacks on syndromes of problems are beyond the "pale" in such a system.

Another impediment to writing a rational State Plan is that the relationship among federal legislation, regulations, guidelines and reports, and the State Plan, guidelines and reports, is unclear. "Among" is used advisedly, as the relationship is by no means two-sided. Familiarity with the federal documents varies wildly at the State level and State Plans often inaccurately reflect them. Coincidentally, there may be great divergence between the State Plan and the guidelines which supposedly implement it. *The distance between federal intent and state action can be great indeed.*

The problem is compounded when the legislation is complex, the regulations confusing, and the guidelines contradictory. While opportunities may seem many for broad, state-serving interpretation in such an instance, often fund administrators are too busy keeping financial records straight to strike out on their own. Any equilibrium that they attain is perceived as too precarious to change. Where responsibility for administration is broadly diffused

among federal, state, and local authorities, the situation is even more difficult. The department's constituency is vocal, its professional "canons" rigid, and its political position unsteady. Consequently, any arrangements it can arrive at that satisfy these contingencies are adhered to in a manner reminiscent of *stare decisis* (standing by in a decided manner).

This inflexible situation in which program administrators find themselves has insulated them from the community they serve, and thus from any impetus to change. The growing public dissatisfaction with the educational system may make department staff apathetic, even hostile, to the urban crisis causing it. Some seem to feel that trying to meet the cities' insatiable needs is pouring precious money down a "rat hole." Others feel that *suburbs are the way of the future* and they should be prepared for it.

Long-ingrained opinion that educational need is universal and economic need irrelevant reinforces these attitudes. Diverting state or federal funds from a comparatively wealthy suburban district to improve a poor urban one is regarded as favoritism rather than compensation; two schools without libraries are considered equally deprived, even if one has a playground and a cafeteria and the other does not. Furthermore, standards rise constantly with acquisition, and so remain comfortably above averages. Nearly all New Jersey schools fall below the national standard of ten library books per student and consequently, all are considered in need.

What this portends for Model Cities is not that obstructions to more programs cannot be removed, but that priorities are not easily accepted and installed. If exclusion is favoritism, then priorities are unfair. The problem is to convince the education professionals that some needs are more important than others, and that schools cannot be expected to do all things for all people.

Despite the problems encountered in ambitious attempts to produce department-wide changes under a one-year contract--the problems are proportionate to the ambitions--the Model Cities Project succeeded in some significant ways thanks in large measure to the cooperation of dedicated department professionals.

1. *State plans (or their equivalents) have been analyzed for all significant federal aid programs administered in the Department. In simplified form they could be especially useful to CDAs and LEAs as they clear away much of the mystery surrounding the several grant-in-aid programs.*

2. *Negotiations with the Commissioner's active support have led to changes in the ESEA Title III program, where Model Cities were designated a priority area and funding followed in six districts; in ESEA Title II, a relative need formula has replaced an across-the-board scheme, with the result that Model Cities gain a larger share of library funds; earmarking has been adopted as a policy in those programs identified from the analyses as having sufficient state discretion. And negotiations with fund administrators are continuing.*

3. *The Office of Planning, which is conducting a state-wide needs assessment, has cooperated with the Model Cities staff to include substantial participation by Model Neighborhood residents in the important program of goals formulation and priority setting for New Jersey.*

4. *The entire system of state plan development is undergoing improvement, with participation broadened to include Model Cities staff. Plans soon are expected to incorporate the state-wide priorities.*

5. *The newly created Bureau of Grants Management Services has worked with Model Cities staff to design a system of grants management as a means of monitoring grant awards for their compliance with state priorities. The Model Cities staff has been given responsibilities for reviewing proposals from Model Cities districts.*

Section Five

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

The New Jersey Department of Education under this contract has tried to do two things simultaneously--to provide on-site technical assistance to the Model Cities and to orient the Department itself to the special need for resources in the Model Neighborhoods. To fulfill the technical assistance mission, the Department designed a unique plan of action. *Assigning Department of Education personnel full-time to local communities was without precedent. Installing these Department specialists in the CDAs was also a new departure.* The rationale for this model (described at length in Section 2) derived from the importance and magnitude of the planning job confronting CDAs, their short-handedness, and the traditional problems of producing educational change through agencies outside of the school system structure.

School systems, with department leadership and guidance, could be brought into constructive partnership in the Model Cities planning process. Indeed, it was imperative that schools become involved since what the CDAs planned, LEAs would ordinarily carry out. The development of effective working relationships could not be a matter of memos and phone calls alone or occasional visits. Moreover, the presence of department staff would legitimize CDA education activities in the eyes of professionally self-conscious educators.

From the department's viewpoint, on-site staff would facilitate the mobilization of SEA's resources, broaden the SEA's constituency, and serve as trained and experienced advisors on the knotty problems of producing change in the school districts. The conventional wisdom held that LEAs would oppose SEA intervention on ideological grounds. That is, SEA on-site staff would run counter to and threaten local autonomy. In point of fact, no superintendent complained. On the contrary, LEAs acknowledged the effectiveness of state technical assistance. The "negative" evaluation from the absence of opposition may be traceable to the low profile of SEA field staff who served as advisors without authority, who deferred to local decision-makers, who worked with an orderly Model Cities process as professional consultants. But the unobtrusiveness does not explain the widespread approval of superintendents and CDA Directors, as determined from personal interviews. The field staff performed useful functions that would have been more difficult without the state affiliation, their neutrality and their professional acceptability in terms of training and experience.

The pilot project has demonstrated the feasibility of this unusual model. It is of course the barest beginning, but it is a beginning. *The moral may*

be simply that good men do good work. But the Department of Education has attracted good men for a challenging task and put them where the needs are. As a vehicle for delivery of technical assistance, this network of educational specialists has great potential.

Concurrent with field activities, the Model Cities Project provided back-up support and engaged in planning to secure additional resources for Model Cities. The New Jersey Department of Education administers some twenty distinct and separate grant-in-aid programs. For the most part, each program has its own state plan, its own guidelines, its own deadlines and its own fund administrators. A City Demonstration Agency in search of funds and information confronts something of a maze. There is no easy access, no "handle" on the department. This really feudal structure presents problems for a school district as well, but the district has had more experience with the array of categorical grant programs, is part of the department's constituency, and receives notices, bulletins and guidelines routinely. The CDA must master not only the intricacies of this department's programs, but those of every other state and federal agency with funds that could aid Model Neighborhoods. Simply getting around to the program offices, getting to know fund administrators, becoming familiar with the major programs can be an arduous and time-consuming job.

The Model Cities Project accepted the profusion of programs as a "given." The purpose was not to rail against the system or to sketch out a blueprint for top-to-bottom reform in the federal education aid structure. Instead, the Model Cities Project sought to identify areas of state discretion. How could the Department of Education, here and now, as administrator of these federal funds, do more to help Model Cities within the existing legal constraints? The Department of Education was not a pawn in this game. The federal laws did not dictate every state action. Within a given program the Department exercised some authority. The Model Cities Project undertook to pinpoint and then constructively influence the Department in the exercise of this authority.

The Department of Education wrote an annual "State Plan" for many of these programs. What was in the State Plan? How much was repetition of federal requirements and how much was the state itself free to determine? What procedures were established to administer the program? Could they be improved? Even a strict formula grant program like ESEA Title I, which is less susceptible to changes, allows the Department some discretion. *Funds unexpended or turned back could be reprogrammed for Model Cities.* A state advisory council was not mandated, nor was it proscribed. There were still more changes within the power of the department to make to aid Model Cities.

So the Model Cities Project began with state plans, examined them in the light of the federal statutes, regulations and guidelines and, its analysis completed, made immediate recommendations for adding Model Cities representatives to state advisory bodies, for adjusting formulas, for promoting LEA-CDA collaboration in the development of programs, and for sensitizing the Department to the special needs of Model Neighborhoods.

Recommendations were also made for the restructuring of the department's grant-administration machinery. (Others in the Department, it should be emphasized, were already at work on several facets of this restructuring.) In brief, there should be state goals, which should be incorporated in every

State Plan and enforced in the grant approval process through a system of grants management. *Model Cities, it hardly needs to be said, will be a priority goal.* But the significance of these changes in department administration which the Model Cities Project initiated or to which it gave impetus, is that they will permit the department to marshal resources for the accomplishment, not only of Model Cities assistance, but any state objective.

A major consequence of the adoption of the needs assessment, state plan development, and grants management scheme will be to place the onus of responsibility for assisting Model Cities, to a large extent, on the department itself. The Model Cities Project meantime would ensure the dissemination of timely information on grants available to CDAs. On-site SEA field staff could work with LEA and CDA in the preparation of proposals for funding.

The change recommended for each program and indeed the full-scale reformation of the SEA administrative structure, even if adopted *in toto*, would still take time. The Model Cities might not realize a substantial increase in funds in the immediate future. Therefore earmarking commends itself as a complementary measure whose effects would be immediate.

Earmarking, such as introduced, requires a set-aside of a fair share of discretionary funds for eligible agencies in Model Cities. It does not mean that monies are allocated without regard for quality. On the contrary, only proposals meeting criteria of approval are funded. Moreover, funds not expended for Model Cities, in the event approvable proposals are not submitted, can be reallocated. But *earmarking recognizes the severity of need in Model Cities and gives them reasonable expectations against which to plan effectively.*

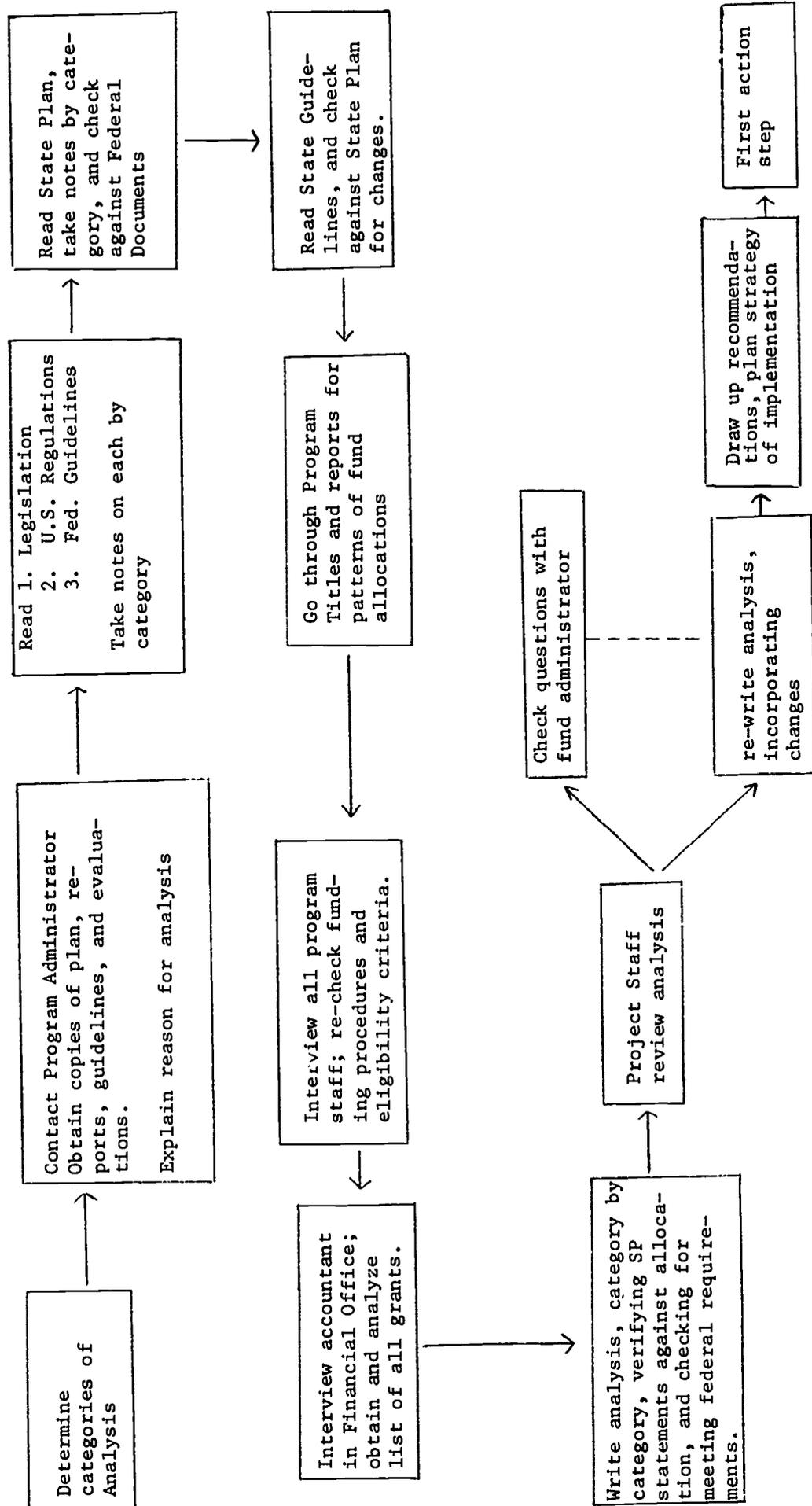
In conclusion, the accomplishments of the Model Cities Project are as follows:

- Eight trained and experienced SEA Consultants were deployed on-site in the New Jersey Model Cities.
- A unit was created in the department as a central point of contact for CDAs and as a clearinghouse for information on programs and funding.
- Ten training sessions, in which CDA education planners participated, were conducted in the Department and occasionally around the State.
- The level of funding in Model Cities was substantially increased in the past year.
- Relationships between CDAs and LEAs were, in the opinion of CDA Directors and local superintendents of schools, markedly improved.
- The quality of education plans and programs was improved. Several innovative programs were planned with the assistance of department field staff: *Model Schools* in Newark, *Project Plan* in Atlantic City, *Early Childhood* in Trenton, and *Guaranteed Performance* in Paterson.
- "State Plans" or their equivalents for the major grant-in-aid programs were analyzed and recommendations made.

- Earmarking has been adopted as a strategy for the coming year.
- The Model Cities Project has been elevated to an Office of Model Cities.
- Internal Model Cities staff has participated in the major activities of the department--goal setting, state plan development, and a grants management system.
- Five other State Departments of Education have received the New Jersey materials, aided the Project with suggestions, and begun, in some cases, their own efforts to adapt innovations tried in the Model Cities Project.
- A Coordinating Council for Model Cities was established in the department as a forum for the discussion of Model Cities education needs, for review of plans and provision of technical assistance, and as a means of orienting top staff to Model Cities programs and processes.
- The processes followed in the implementation of this Model Cities Project have been documented in eleven monthly reports.
- Impediments in the SEA itself have been identified.
- Inter-agency coordination has been stepped up--in earmarking process and in the reviews of Model Cities submissions.

APPENDIX A

FLOWCHART OF STATE PLAN ANALYSIS



APPENDIX B

RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY MODEL CITIES PROJECT

(Indicated by X)

	General Communique (Alert)	State Advisory Council	Local Reciprocal Involvement	Funding Priority	Joint Development (Sign-Off)	Earmarking	Policy Changes
ESEA I	X		X	X			X
ESEA II	X	X	X	X		X	X
ESEA III	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
ESEA V	X						
ESEA VI-A	X	X	X	X			X
VOC. ED.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NDEA III	X			X			X
NDEA V-A	X		X	X			X
EPDA	X		X		X		
ADULT ED.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
FOOD SERVICES	X		X	X	X	X	X