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ABSTRACT

This monograph, summarizing the ideas of participants attending a two-day mini-conference, was developed to help educators better understand some of the problems to be overcome in gaining support from their local chamber of commerce for career education. This booklet first presents the educator with five facts of life regarding the goals, structure, and operations of a local chamber of commerce. This is followed by examples of ways in which particular local chambers of commerce have been actively engaged in community career education efforts. Focus of these examples is on helping teachers gain experience in industry, coordinating the collaborative efforts of schools and business/labor/industry, and communicating the career education concept to the community. Finally, this monograph concludes with suggestions of ways to get greater chamber of commerce involvement in career education. A list of participants and issues they raised is appended. (EM)

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**MONOGRAPHS ON CAREER EDUCATION**

**CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE  
AND  
CAREER EDUCATION**

by  
Kenneth B. Hoyt, *Director*  
Office of Career Education  
Office of Education

July 1978

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE**

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## Preface

During the period covering November, 1977, through May, 1978, OE's Office of Career Education sponsored, through a contract with Inter-America Research Associates a series of mini-conferences devoted to the general topic of The Concept of Collaboration in Career Education. This monograph is one in a series of OCE monographs aimed at providing a narrative summary of ideas and thoughts gathered from particular community segments represented in this series of mini-conferences.

Participants in each mini-conference associated with a particular segment of the broader community were selected for OCE and Inter-America Research Associates by the organization itself. Lists of all participants whose thoughts are summarized in this monograph, are presented as Appendix A of this monograph. It is important to recognize that, while participants are properly thought of as *representatives* from the particular community segment involved, they are, in no way, to be thought of as *representing* that community segment. That is, each participant was encouraged to speak only for herself/himself. No formal organizational or institutional commitment was sought nor should be inferred from the contents of this monograph.

In general, each mini-conference involved from 10-15 participants. Each lasted two days with the discussion sessions chaired by the Director, Office of Career Education, USOE. Participants in each mini-conference developed their own agenda through a process that asked them to list topics or issues they thought pertinent to discuss. Once such a list was developed, participants then picked those that appealed most to a majority of the participants for extended discussion. The list of issues and questions, themselves, provide a series of interesting insights into concerns of participants regarding their organizations and career education. A complete listing of the issues and concerns raised by participants in the mini-conference reported in this monograph appears as Appendix B. Readers are urged to study this list carefully.

Notes for each mini-conference were taken personally by the Director, Office of Career Education. Based on such notes, the series of monographs of which this is one has been prepared. The complete notes for each mini-conference have been compiled by Inter-America Research Associates and published as a separate document. Limited copies of this document are available, so long as the supply lasts, to those requesting them from OE's Office of Career Education.

No pretense is made that this monograph represents a comprehensive treatment of the topic. There is no way that, in only two days of discussion, a comprehensive coverage could have been accomplished by the small group of participants involved. This monograph is properly viewed as an attempt to report, as fully as possible, the discussions that took place. By and large, the contents of this monograph are limited to ideas and thoughts of the participants. At times, some of my own personal thoughts and opinions are interwoven into the discussion, but the natural temptation to do so has been resisted insofar as possible.

Primary expressions of thanks for this monograph must go to the participants themselves who donated two full days of their time, without an honorarium, to sharing their thoughts with me and, through this monograph, with you. In addition, special thanks and recognition must be expressed to Dr. William Mermis, Professor, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, who served as Consultant to Inter-America Research Associates and assisted me in the conduct of these mini-conferences. Finally, thanks are also due Dr. Brady Fletcher and Ms. Odie Esparza of Inter-America Research Associates for their expert logistical assistance.

Kenneth B. Hoyt, Director  
Office of Career Education  
U.S. Office of Education

## **Introduction**

The Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America, (COCUSA), with memberships from approximately 72,000 business firms, is the largest organization in the United States representing the business/industry community. When one considers the State and local Chambers of Commerce existing in cities and towns throughout the Nation and the 1,200 Trade association members, it obviously represents an even more potent force.

Fortunately for the career education movement, COCUSA, through its Education, Employment and Training Committee, took an early national leadership role in furthering career education as a collaborative effort. In 1973, the COCUSA organized and conducted a National Conference on Career Education and published a report of its proceedings. In 1975, COCUSA again took a national leadership role by inviting a variety of other national organizations to work collaboratively with COCUSA in developing a consensus position paper on career education. It, too, has received much attention since its publication.

Both because of the national career education leadership supplied by COCUSA and because of the prominent position local chambers of commerce enjoy in communities, it has been natural for educators interested in career education to seek support for and involvement in career education on the part of their local chamber of commerce. Many have been disappointed when their appeals for help were not immediately accepted. This monograph seeks to help educators better understand some of the practical problems to be overcome in gaining support from their local chamber of commerce for career education. This is followed by a series of examples of ways in which particular local chambers of commerce have been actively engaged in community career education efforts. Finally, the monograph concludes with a series of suggestions with respect to ways in which even greater involvement of local chambers of commerce in career education may be possible.

## **Chamber of Commerce "Facts of Life" For Educators**

If educators in any given community wish to involve their local chamber of commerce in career education, it is essential that they begin with a clear understanding of the basic goals, structure, and operations of a local chamber of commerce and its relationship to the National Chamber. In this section, several such "facts of life" are enumerated as stated by seminar participants.

1. *The basic goal of any local chamber of commerce must be to serve its members.* Its members are primarily businesses, and individuals employed and/or operating such businesses. In any given community, the local chamber of commerce top priority must be one of seeking further business/industrial development. It seeks to strengthen the private enterprise system in the local community so as to give that community greater economic strength. The old adage, "the business of business is business" is very apt for use in describing first priorities of the local chamber of commerce. Of course, one of the greatest needs of business is a well-trained work force—particularly in this age of a shortage of skilled workers. Thus, the objectives of the chamber of commerce and career education do overlap. This is not to say that there exists no priority or social concern for community improvement—including improvement in the school system—at the local chamber of commerce. Rather, it is simply to emphasize that the local chamber of commerce typically has, as its top priority, improving the status and health of the private enterprise system in that community.

2. *Many local chamber of commerce executives are not involved in Career Education Programs.* As with most organizations operating with a local executive head, the degree to which that executive is aware of the importance of a topic directly influences actions of the organization. Educators should be aware of the fact that local chamber of commerce executives receive much of their organization management training primarily through a series of Institutes for organization management. These institutes are focused primarily around providing participants with managerial skills. While a series of "electives" is built into the Summer institute schedule aimed at helping the local chamber executive acquire some "action ideas," the topic of "career education" has never been placed on the Summer institute agenda by itself. It is now only a small portion of the Program of Work Development Section. It is hoped that more emphasis will be placed on career education in the total Institute program.

Simply because the COCUSA has published two career education monographs in no way assures that all, or even a majority, of local chamber executive officers will have them in their possession—let alone that they have read them. The local chamber of commerce executive receives a great many kinds of materials from the COCUSA. It is only natural that primary attention is given to those materials that the local chamber executive sees as being most directly related to his/her major immediate duties and responsibilities. It is probably true that more educators have seen and studied the COCUSA monographs on career education than have local chamber of commerce executives.

3. *Only about half of the local chambers of commerce of the Nation have an Education committee—let alone a subcommittee on career education.* There is no requirement imposed by the national COCUSA that a local chamber of

commerce establish an Education committee. As a matter of fact, the formal relationships existing between the National Chamber and local counterparts prohibits setting any such "requirements." Typically, each local chamber of commerce develops, through its committee structure, a "program of work" for the coming year. If there exists no education committee, the chances of having career education included on the agenda of this "program of work" are diminished. (Note: They are *not* eliminated completely—i.e., several participants reported their local chamber is actively engaged in career education even though they have no formal Education committee.)

4. *There exists no automatic motivation, on the part of a local Chamber of Commerce, to take on a program recommended to them by their local Board of Education.* The local Chamber Executive is charged with responding to needs as expressed by the businesspersons he/she represents, not those expressed by the local Education system. Unless a "what's in it for me?" kind of approach is used, it is unlikely that the local Board of Education will be able to establish close and effective working relationships with their local chamber of commerce. There is no automatic reason why a local Chamber of commerce should respond positively to a request made by a local Board of Education. If "the business of business is business" adage is followed, it is natural, in many communities, to adopt a similar adage that says "the business of Education is Education"!

5. *It is unreasonable to expect that a local Chamber of Commerce will make a commitment of resources and time to career education unless and until the local Board of Education has done so.* In too many communities, a local educator who is a career education advocate has attempted to enlist the support of the local Chamber of Commerce in "selling" career education to the local school board. This is not a proper role for the local chamber of commerce to play. In other communities, the local school board has, in effect, asked local businesses to underwrite the complete costs of Summer experiences for educators in the broader occupational society. If a local school board has made a commitment to career education, the local chamber of commerce would like to see that commitment expressed, in part, through allocation of some portion of the school board's budget to career education. If this is done and the school board then asks the local chamber of commerce for help, it is more likely that some of the Chamber's resources might be allocated for career education. The local Chamber of Commerce cannot be expected to underwrite programs that the local Board of education refused to finance at all.

These "facts of life" are inserted at the beginning of this monograph simply for purposes of providing a sense of reality to educators who seek to enlist participation of their local chamber of commerce in career education efforts. They are, in no way, intended to convey a sense of discouragement of

hopelessness to such educators. There is a natural tendency for those of us in Education to expect that persons from all other segments of society will share our deep sense of urgency and concern for problems youth face in the education/work domain. We must not be discouraged if, at times, such persons appear to have other things on their mind.

The remainder of this monograph is devoted to specific examples of positive actions taken by local chamber of commerce officials with respect to career education. The examples to be used are necessarily limited to those supplied by participants in the miniconference on which this monograph has been based. Readers should bear in mind that hundreds of other examples exist in other parts of the Nation that could well be included here. Hopefully, even the limited examples presented here will serve to illustrate some of the positive ways in which local Chambers of Commerce can be, and are, active in implementing career education.

#### **Helping Teachers Gain Experience In Industry: Action Examples**

Participants in the seminar seemed to be agreed on the point that local chambers of commerce could play a helpful role in career education through stimulating and participating in programs aimed at giving educators—particularly academic classroom teachers—some bonafide experience in the private enterprise system. It appeared obvious to these participants that many, many teachers are in need of this kind of experience—far more than could reasonably be accommodated in any given community. General consensus appeared present that whatever efforts are undertaken should be organized in such a way that they have a “multiplier effect” in terms of that teacher’s future interactions with students. The desirability and appropriateness of such activities, on the part of a local chamber of commerce, seemed clear.

At the same time, participants reported a series of operational problems encountered in putting this kind of good idea into practice. First, they pointed out that the number of Summer jobs available for teachers in most communities is very limited in the private sector. There is no practical way this effort can be thought of as one involving all teachers in a school system. Second, it was pointed out that, if Summer jobs created for teachers were seen, in any way, as a threat to jobs of union workers, there would inevitably be great difficulty putting the program into operation. Third, it was pointed out that it is unrealistic to plan on the private enterprise system paying the entire cost of this kind of teacher inservice education.

This third point seemed especially important to these seminar participants. One participant reported that, if teachers are brought into the private

enterprise system for a day or two at a time during the regular school year, substitute teachers could be employed to replace them at a cost of somewhere between \$35-\$40 per day. Under this kind of arrangement, the teacher gaining experience in the private enterprise setting would not be paid wages and the school system could be expected to pay wages for the substitute teachers. On the other hand, that same community reported an average cost of \$412.36 per hour for teacher time during the Summer months (total-including-overhead) if teachers are employed by the private enterprise system during that period. Teachers seem to prefer the Summer employment arrangement over the occasional "day off from school" arrangement. Many employers would prefer the "day off from school" arrangement that operates with no major cost to the employer. Some of the examples to be presented here will illustrate this point further. We turn now to a series of such examples.

The Boston Tri-Lateral Council for Quality Education has embarked on an active campaign aimed at helping teachers learn about career implications of their subject matter. Using various occupational clusters, they have completed such a program effort for 9th grade teachers and are now starting it for 10th grade teachers. As part of this effort, they have attempted to initiate a Summer program whereby teachers could gain some actual experience in the private enterprise system. They have discovered that the cost of such a program-including teacher stipends-would be approximately \$1,000 per teacher. Neither the school system nor private industry in the Greater Boston area has, to date, been willing to pay this \$1,000 per teacher cost.

When Summer experiences in the private sector are offered to teachers at no pay, difficulties have been encountered in getting teachers interested and involved. Such a program was attempted for several Summers under leadership of the Flint (Michigan) Area Chamber of Commerce. It was finally abandoned, not because of unwillingness on the part of industry, but rather because so few teachers took advantage of this opportunity. The principle of asking teachers to spend time during the Summer months acquiring new knowledge that will improve their effectiveness in the classroom is one that has been in effect for many years in professional education. It is typically called "Summer School" and consists of one or more courses taken for credit at a college or university. Teachers aren't typically paid stipends to attend Summer School. Why, then, should they insist on being given stipends to acquire new knowledge in the private enterprise system? Some participants suggested that, perhaps, if arrangements could be made for extending some kind of inservice credit to teachers participating in this kind of experience, more might be willing to do so.

A successful use of small business enterprises in helping teachers learn about the private enterprise system was conducted under leadership of the Longmont

Colorado Chamber of Commerce. This program, operating during the school year, saw arrangements under which the teacher left the classroom to spend one day working in a small business enterprise while a person from that enterprise took over the teacher's classes for the day. This arrangement was viewed as beneficial by all concerned. Other seminar participants joined in recommending greater involvement of small business enterprises, as opposed to large industries, for teacher Summer work experience opportunities on the basis that it is these places where high school graduates are most likely to find their first jobs. Others, however, objected on the ground that: (a) the small business operation does not employ enough personnel so that one employee can spend much time with a teacher; (b) teachers cannot be exposed to a wide variety of occupations if they work only in a single small business enterprise; and (c) what many teachers need to experience and appreciate is the boredom of the assembly line and they cannot acquire this if working in a small business operation.

Through efforts of the Atlanta, Georgia Chamber of Commerce, arrangements have been made to train teachers in IBM word processing skills during the Summer so that teachers, with the help of IBM personnel, could transmit such skills to their students during the school year. While this experience was successful in Atlanta, some participants questioned whether or not it could truly be called "career education" if its prime purpose was to provide teachers with specific vocational skills—a function typically thought of as "vocational education."

The Twin Cities Area Chamber of Commerce in Benton Harbor, Michigan has concentrated attention on providing an awards program for teachers enrolled in an economic education course at a local college. Awards are given to those teachers who come up with the best plans for infusing economic awareness and understanding into the teaching/learning process. While some participants supported this as a good idea, others objected by contending that the college/university environment is a poor example—and an even more inadequate substitute—for letting teachers know what the "real world" of private industry is really like.

The question of the extent to which teachers could be expected to be productive contributors to a business enterprise during Summer employment was raised by several participants. Some suggested that, for example, an English teacher can reasonably be expected to possess several types of skills useful to employers simply as a result of the liberal arts education received in college. Others suggested that academic teachers could be most productive to employers if, in effect, they operated during the Summer months in training personnel for business enterprises. Still others pointed out that if, in effect, teachers worked in industry simply as another type of "teacher," they would

miss the essential point of learning what they need to know about the private enterprise system itself.

In short, while participants generally agreed that it would be both appropriate and helpful for local chambers of commerce to undertake projects aimed at helping educators learn more about the private enterprise system, it was obvious that no universally accepted outstanding example of successful practice in this area was found among these seminar participants. If an attempt were to be made to list the general principles on which consensus (but not universal agreement) could be found among these participants, such a list would include:

1. The prime purpose of providing teachers opportunities to work in private businesses should be to increase the teachers' understanding of the private enterprise system, not to increase productivity for employers. To the extent this purpose predominates, teachers should not be paid for this kind of experience.
2. To the extent that the prime purpose is providing teachers with experience in the private enterprise system, then the costs of the operation should be shared by the education system and the teachers with little or no contribution coming from employers. To the extent that employers expect productivity, they should share in the costs.
3. Summer experiences in the private enterprise system for educators should include seminars acquainting teachers with the private enterprise system. To the extent this can be integrated with the work experience itself as a total learning experience, it is reasonable to plan programs whereby educators can receive inservice education credit for their participation.
4. It is relatively unimportant whether teacher experience in the private enterprise system occurs in small businesses or in large industries. What is important is that teachers be exposed to a variety of experiences. In the case of small businesses, this means moving from one business enterprise to another. In the case of large industry, this means moving from one part of the industrial workplace to another.
5. It is as appropriate to plan teacher experiences in the private enterprise system during the academic year as it is during the Summer months. When carried out during the academic year, it will likely be a combination of a given number of school days coupled with after school experiences.
6. It is preferable if summer work experiences for teachers in the private enterprise system call for activities different from actual teaching. Teachers

possess many other kinds of skills that could be profitably utilized by the private enterprise system.

7. Any systematic program aimed at providing educators with experience in the private enterprise system should be organized and operated so as to count on a "multiplier effect." It is not practical to think of providing work experience for all educators in the school system nor to provide any educator with the optimal breadth of experience. Sharing of information among educators must be an essential part of the plan.

8. The ideal plan is one that combines a goal of maximizing the number and variety of opportunities for educators to learn about the private enterprise system with a goal of increasing productivity for employers. A program concentrating at only one of these extremes is regarded as less desirable.

Participants were generally agreed that it is a proper role for a local chamber of commerce to encourage this kind of learning opportunity for educators. There was no firm consensus regarding whether or not it is an activity that should be directly sponsored by the local chamber of commerce. In some communities, it would be very appropriate for the local chamber of commerce to be the primary program vehicle, while, in others, the primary role of the local chamber of commerce will be more appropriately carried out as that of a catalytic organization. In still other communities, the local chamber of commerce may find their participation in this kind of effort limited to merely endorsing the idea for their membership with no further action coming from the Chamber itself. Even this most limited role was seen, by participants, as inappropriate in those communities where the local school board has failed to endorse the career education concept.

Finally, these seminar participants voiced an opinion that the probabilities of interesting local chambers of commerce on this kind of effort may well increase if and when such organizations become actively involved in the private sector participation portions of the new CETA legislation. Strong feelings were expressed that the local chamber of commerce could—and should—play an effective role in increasing private sector involvement in solving the current youth problems of transition from school to work. If this occurs, they seemed to feel it would serve to motivate local chambers of commerce to also participate more actively in providing inservice education to teachers and other educators regarding the private enterprise system. In my personal opinion, it would be most unfortunate if this became a determining factor in decisions made by a given local chamber of commerce—although it might well serve as an additional motivational force.

### Coordinating School System—Business/Labor/Industry Collaborative Efforts

As more and more elementary and secondary schools embark on career education efforts, the problems of establishing and operating effective working relationships between schools and the business/labor/industry community increase. Because initial career education efforts often start at the school building level, rather than the school district level, many business/industrial organizations are finding themselves besieged with a variety of different kinds of requests for help. Each school has, in effect, set up their own version of "collaboration" and, at times, the problem extends even further in that different teachers within the same building have different ideas about the appropriate use of business/industry resources. The business/labor/industry community cannot sensibly respond to such a wide variety of uncoordinated requests. Several participants in this seminar saw the local chamber of commerce as an ideal organization to pull all the elements of the business/industry community together so that one coordinated source of assistance could be made systematically available to school systems. Several specific examples will be presented in this section.

The Twin Cities Area Chamber of Commerce in Benton Harbor, Michigan has embarked on an effort to help persons from the business/industry community better understand how they can work with schools in career education. They discovered that requests from school persons to serve as resource persons in the classroom or as sites for field visits were, in many instances, being filled by informing teachers and students about the products being produced by the particular business or industry involved. An attempt has been made to help such organizations understand that the primary need of educators and students is to better understand the occupations and the worker lifestyles within business and industry, not the products being produced. This has resulted in a greater uniformity of effort from the business/industry community in career education.

The Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce recognized and took leadership in solving the problem of coordinating teacher requests to industry for participation in career education. They have produced a wide variety of materials for use by educators and by business/industry personnel including: (a) a short statement explaining career education to business persons; (b) a "Career Education Speakers Bureau" catalog for use by school personnel; (c) a referral form for use by educators in requesting speakers from the business/industry community; and (d) a "Career Education Speakers' Handbook" for use by business/industry persons who serve as resource persons in schools. Operationally, teachers who desire a speaker or wish to take students on field trips are asked to contact the school district's Coordinator of Career Education. That person, in turn, makes contact with the Metropolitan Tulsa

Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber, then, makes the actual contact from the list of resource persons that the Chamber itself developed.

The Tri-Lateral Council For Quality Education in Boston, Massachusetts operates an even more specific program involving one key contact person for each school building and one key contact person for each business/industry organization. When a teacher needs to use the resources of the business/industry community, he/she goes to the school contact person who makes contact with the Tri-Lateral Council. The Council, using its list of business/industry contact persons, then goes to that person to arrange the details required for meeting the specific teacher request. There exists a formal working relationship between the Tri-Lateral Council and the Boston School Board for carrying out this coordinated effort.

In Flint, Michigan, the Flint Area Chamber of Commerce has, in effect, taken responsibility for: (a) identifying persons from the business/industry community to work with school persons; (b) processing arrangement for educators to interact with persons from the business/labor/industry community; and (c) training business/labor/industry personnel with respect to what they should wear, what they should talk about, and how they should interact with educators and with students in the public schools. This entire arrangement works through a Business/Education Coordinating Council established by the Chamber of Commerce and involving both business/industry personnel and educators. The Council meets once a month. During the past year, it has arranged such programs as "A Day On The Job" where 800 11th and 12th graders were placed for one entire day in one of 140 business/industry organizations. In addition, through the coordinative efforts of the Council, a total of 176 presenters from business/industry conducted a total of 60 conferences in 16 high schools touching more than 4,000 high school students. On a daily operational basis, educators make contacts with the Chamber and Chamber official then contact appropriate persons from the business/industry community.

The Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce has an Education Council that works specifically with career education personnel in the school system. In addition, there is a **LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE** in Oklahoma City that includes representatives from the chamber, the school board, and from other parts of the community. Concerned about a broad range of civic issues, the topic of "Education" is one of many considered by the Committee. The Committee serves a general community coordinating function with the Chamber being one organization on it.

A similar arrangement exists in Atlanta, Georgia where the Area Wide Council For Career and Occupational Resource Development (**ACCORD**)

exists. Established by the Atlanta Chamber of commerce, ACCORD has representatives from the business/labor/industry community, from local Government, and from Education. Originally designed to make 5-10 year employment forecasts, they have, in recent years, moved into such things as a formal "adopt-a-school" program and a listing of educational resources that might be useful to particular local industries. ACCORD is currently being funded by the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce and reflects the Chamber's feeling of close relationships between economic education and career education.

In New Orleans, Louisiana, as in many other communities, Chamber professional personnel specifically assigned to Education are limited. Accordingly, the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce encouraged formation of the New Orleans Business Task Force, a nonprofit organization that operates under contract with the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce. The Task Force is primarily responsible for its own fund raising efforts. While it includes no educators at present, plans are underway to do so and, when this occurs, it is expected that the Business Task Force will play a community coordinating role for career education.

One of the most comprehensive and most active community coordinating efforts exists in Dallas, Texas. In Dallas, there exists a COORDINATING NETWORK FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION that includes eight major task forces. One of these eight task forces consists of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce Career Education Program. This program is housed in a special "Career Education Department" which is an integral part of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce. There are four professional positions in this Department including: (a) an executive director; (b) a communications specialist; (c) an "adopt-a-school" specialist; and (d) a Program specialist. Each of these positions is funded by the Dallas School Board even though persons employed in them work directly for the Dallas Chamber of Commerce. The arrangement operates under a contract between the Dallas School Board and the Dallas Chamber of Commerce. With this special Career Education Department in operation, such activities as the following are currently being carried out: (a) coordination of 30 school/industry advisory committees; (b) operation of a comprehensive "adopt-a-school" program; (c) location of work-study sites for high school students; (d) construction and dissemination of a COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE for use of the school district; and (e) maintenance of liaison relationships with the Community Volunteer Office of the Dallas Independent School District. Both the willingness of the Dallas School Board to provide financial support for this effort and the willingness of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce to house and support operations of a Career Education Department are considered keys to the success of this comprehensive effort.

Of course, many school systems exist who are building, maintaining, and using resource guides for community personnel on a coordinated basis on their own. For example, in the State of Colorado, county-wide systems have been initiated by school systems aimed at coordinating all business/labor/industry resources for career education. An outstanding example is seen in Jefferson County, Colorado where, using a computerized system, the school handles more than 400 teacher requests per day for resource persons from the business/labor/industry community.

Finally, with respect to this "coordination of community resources" role, the question was raised with participants with respect to how the local chamber's efforts to organize and coordinate business/labor/industry resources to work with educators relates to similar needs expressed by groups such as Junior Achievement, Exploring Program, Scouting USA, National Alliance of Business, and other groups who seek to "marry" business/labor/industry resources with those of the Education system. It was generally agreed that the local Chamber of Commerce could appropriately serve all such groups. Such a role is currently being played by the local Chamber of Commerce in Oklahoma City, in Flint, Michigan, and in Boston, Massachusetts—at least to some extent. Other local Chambers of Commerce represented in this seminar reported no current involvement of this type at the present time.

As with the preceding possible role of the local Chamber of Commerce in career education, an attempt will be made here to list some general principles on which apparent consensus existed, among these seminar participants. Keeping in mind both the limited number of persons attending this seminar while simultaneously recognizing the high degree of involvement each has had in career education, the following list of principles is presented for consideration both by educators and by other local chambers of commerce:

1. There does exist a need for greater use of community resources in all of public education. To the extent this need is met, there will be an increase in both efficiency and effectiveness of public school operations.

2. Among the various community elements that should be interacting more with the Education system, the business/labor/industry community is very important. The particular interests and responsibilities of the business/labor/industry community encompass both career education and vocational education.

3. The limited resources of the business/labor/industry community can be most effectively utilized as a force for improving the Education system if a systematic, coordinated plan for interaction between educators and persons from the business/labor/industry community is utilized. To ask the business/

labor community to respond simply to random requests made by individual teachers or individual schools is not the answer.

4. The local Chamber of Commerce could appropriately play a role in organizing and coordinating efforts of the business/labor/industry community to interact with the Education system in both career education and in vocational education.

5. Whether or not, in any community, the local Chamber of Commerce should play such a role is dependent on a variety of factors including: (a) the extent to which the local Chamber of Commerce has Education as one of its high priorities; (b) the extent to which the Education system is willing to enter into formal financial or non-financial agreements with the local Chamber of Commerce; and (c) the extent to which other community groups representing persons from the business/labor/industry community are willing for the local Chamber of Commerce to assume such a role. In some communities, this will be both possible and desirable while, in other communities, it will not.

In short, participants seemed to agree that: (a) it is vital that the resources of the business/labor/industry community be systematically coordinated for use in Education; and (b) it is appropriate for the local Chamber of Commerce to consider playing this role. They did *not* see this role as an implicit responsibility of any local Chamber of Commerce.

#### Communicating the Career Education Concept To the Community

As a relatively new and quite different approach to educational change and to preparing youth for work, career education efforts suffer greatly from lack of understanding on the part of the general community regarding the exact nature and goals of career education. There is confusion on such specific issues as differences between career education and vocational education, between career education and economic education, and between career education and career guidance. Several seminar participants saw a potentially useful role of the local Chamber of Commerce being that of actively embarking on a campaign aimed at helping the general public—as well as the business/labor/industry community itself—better understand the nature and goals of career education.

In part, the Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America, (COCUSA), was attempting to help solve this problem through its earlier efforts aimed at holding a National Career Education Conference and through publishing two official COCUSA monographs on career education. Unfortunately, these excellent COCUSA publications have yet to receive the careful attention they

deserve in many local communities. It is hoped that readers of this monograph will be encouraged to secure and to use these COCUSA publications. Even if this is done, it must be recognized that local efforts, not national publications (such as the COCUSA documents or this monograph) represent the prime vehicle for solving this problem at the local level.

An immediate controversy arose among seminar participants regarding whether or not it is desirable to mount a special Chamber of Commerce campaign aimed specifically at career education. As mentioned earlier, both the Tulsa, Oklahoma Chamber of Commerce and the Dallas Chamber of Commerce have prepared and distributed special publications around the topic of "career education." One of the most ambitious State Chamber of Commerce efforts aimed specifically at helping the general public better understand career education can be seen in Colorado. There, 35 of the 37 local Chambers of Commerce in the State have mounted a special campaign, in cooperation with the Denver Junior League, aimed at helping both the Colorado State legislature and the general public in Colorado better understand career education. The major "messages" included in this campaign include: (a) Colorado youth are experiencing many problems in the Education/work domain and career education can help solve them; (b) career education is a vehicle useful in getting the public more involved in Education; and (c) career education is a useful vehicle for infusing economic education into the public school system. In keeping with this third point, the Colorado Chamber of Commerce is encouraging use of their economic education program (called PROJECT CONFIDENCE) as an integral part of career education implementation efforts. Through efforts of the Colorado Chamber of Commerce, great progress has been made both in securing support for career education from the Colorado legislature and in helping the general public better understand career education.

In such other communities as Oklahoma City, Atlanta, and Dallas, efforts of the local Chamber of Commerce to help the general public better understand career education are simply made a part of a broader Chamber of Commerce effort to gain more support for the public schools. Oklahoma City, for example, has formed 80 neighborhood groups as one way of dealing with the busing problems growing out of desegregation activities and the Chamber of Commerce is working with these groups. While, to date, the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce has not tried actively to educate these 80 neighborhood groups regarding career education specifically, it was seen as something that could be done.

In Atlanta, Georgia, the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce is attempting to acquaint the general public with career education concepts as part of a broader campaign aimed at gaining more support for public education. Similarly, the Dallas Chamber of Commerce embarked on a major "KEEP IT TOGETHER"

campaign at the time school desegregation began. They now work actively with the school system's BUILDING FOR TOMORROW TODAY campaign which has, as one of its major slogans "Dallas Schools Offer Options To Students." Whenever and wherever this slogan is used, career education becomes an inevitable part of the message being communicated. In neither of these communities has a PR campaign aimed specifically at career education been mounted.

Whether as a separate "career education" or as part of a more general effort to gain greater public involvement in the Education system, participants agreed that some such efforts are needed and that it would be appropriate for the local Chamber of Commerce to be actively involved in them. Several participants pointed to the fact that there are still many business/industry persons who see no need to devote part of their energies to improving the Education system. It has, apparently, been much easier to reach large corporations than it has to reach smaller business enterprises. Similarly, it has apparently been easier to reach heads of major corporations than it has been to reach their employees. A good example of the kinds of practical problems encountered here was seen in Dallas, Texas where 8,000 copies of all career education materials are mailed to heads of employing organizations. The logistical problems that would be encountered were these materials to also be sent to all employees of such organizations are overwhelming and impractical.

Difficult as it has been to reach members of the business/labor/industry community with the career education "message," participants reported it has been even more difficult to reach parents of school age youth. The current problems associated with busing that require children to move from the traditional neighborhood school to attend classes in other parts of the city have, according to some of these participants, complicated the problem.

There was some disagreement among participants regarding the wisdom of publicizing career education as a vehicle for use in infusing economic education into the school system or whether career education and economic education should continue to represent two quite different efforts. Seminar participants from both the Colorado Chamber of Commerce and from the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce indicated that their programs of career education and economic education have become a single effort. In both Tulsa, Oklahoma and in Oklahoma City, however, they are being kept as separate efforts. The Oklahoma City participants expressed a feeling that those economists who have been most actively engaged in economic education efforts neither understand nor have great interest in career education. There was consensus that teaching students about the free enterprise system will make valuable contributions to preparing them to assume useful and productive roles in the occupational society. In this sense, it is certainly part of an overall career education effort whether or not it is publicized as a separate program. My personal feeling is

that those wishing to instill an economic awareness and understanding emphasis in the Education system will find the career education effort a useful vehicle for doing so.

In spite of some of these specific areas of disagreement, seminar participants seemed to be almost universally agreed that it would be a proper role for a local Chamber of Commerce to play if efforts were made to gain greater understanding of career education as an integral part of the total Education system.

### **How To Get More Chambers of Commerce More Involved In Career Education**

The participants in this seminar were obviously career education enthusiasts. Without exception, they had been actively involved in and are seriously committed to participating in career education implementation efforts through local, State, and National Chamber of Commerce groups. Considerable seminar time was devoted to suggestions made by these participants for actions, at all levels, aimed at increasing involvement of the Chamber of Commerce in career education.

Several suggestions were made to career education practitioners for strengthening involvement of Chamber of Commerce personnel specifically, and business/industry personnel in general in career education. Since most of these have implications for local actions as well, they are summarized here in some detail.

1. *Seek to have "career education" become an "elective" topic at the Summer institutes held for Chamber of Commerce executives.* The curriculum for these Summer Institutes is constructed by officials at the American Chamber Headquarters. It was felt that a strong recommendation by the COCUSA Committee on Education, Employment and Training would be helpful here. So, too, would recommendations received from local Chamber of Commerce executives.

2. *Seek to make "career education" a topic at the many "Information and Exchange Sessions" conducted annually for local Chamber of Commerce executives.* These sessions, unlike the formal COCUSA Summer Institute Program, are devoted primarily to a sharing of ideas for action program suggestions that might be carried out by a local Chamber of Commerce. A State Coordinator of Career Education could possibly encourage a State Chamber of Commerce (most States do have such an organization) to take leadership here. Any local career education person from any school system could encourage his/her local Chamber of Commerce executive to request that

"career education" be made a topic at one of these Chamber "information and exchange sessions."

3. *Seek to make career education an action program in the largest metropolitan Chambers of Commerce.* Participants seemed to agree that, if the large metropolitan chambers of commerce had career education efforts, chances are good that smaller communities would follow. There is a separate Metropolitan Council of The American Chamber of Commerce Executives composed of the 80 largest local Chambers of Commerce Nation. If "career education" could be made an agenda item for one of their meetings, progress might be made. Real progress here, however, will come only community by community. Career education persons from urban school districts will have to be the key implementers of this suggestion.

4. *Encourage several explicit career education questions on surveys among the 2,700 local Chambers of Commerce to determine how many are now engaged in career education.* There is an annual survey made by COCUSA to determine activities in which local Chambers of Commerce are engaged. Currently it includes a career education question as part of the overall areas of program development. Possibly explicit breakout of several career education questions would be helpful.

5. *Use the influence of large industrial organizations already committed to career education to influence actions of local Chambers of Commerce.* The prime basis for this recommendation was in the Colorado experience. There, Mountain Bell Telephone Company has a major commitment to career education. Mountain Bell personnel are members of every local Chamber of Commerce to which they spoke about career education. As a result, 35 of the 37 local Chambers of Commerce in Colorado are now involved in career education. This example could be repeated in the other States using the influence of other major corporations already committed to career education.

6. *Make contacts with and try to influence actions favoring career education on the part of other national organizations of business/industrial personnel.* Several participants stressed that educators involved in career education should not put all the "eggs" in the Chamber of Commerce "basket." Instead, they urged that contacts be established with National, State, and local affiliates of such organizations as: (a) The American Industrial Development Council; (b) The International Association of Downtown Executives; (c) The American Society of Personnel Administrators; and (d) The National Management Association. Career education advocates have, to date, made very few contacts with these kinds of organizations at the National, State, or local level.

When career education personnel from a local school system seek to interest and involve their local Chamber of Commerce in career education, the following suggestions made by these seminar participants may be helpful:

1. *Encourage the local Chamber of Commerce to include an Education Committee as one of its standing committees.* Approximately half of all local Chambers of Commerce have such committees now. To "sell" this idea to those who do not, stress that the education system in any community directly influences decisions made by industrial organizations to establish plants in that community—i.e., try to appeal to the local Chamber executive on the basis of his/her needs—not the needs of the school system.

2. *Seek to encourage the Education Committee of the local Chamber of Commerce to recommend "career education" as a priority when decisions are being made about the Chamber's program of work for any given year.* If no Education committee exists, try to work through other Chamber committees such as the Urban Affairs Committee. The point to remember is that most local Chambers of Commerce do establish priorities for an annual program of work primarily through their Committee structure. Unless educators interested in career education are aware of and active in influencing this process, chances of having "career education" included as a priority are limited.

3. *Use specific examples of what other Chambers of Commerce have done in asking a local Chamber to become involved in career education.* The busy Chamber executive does not have time to listen to a broad philosophical discussion of career education. He/she already knows that philosophy and is supportive of it. Action examples of how other local chambers of commerce have helped school systems implement that philosophy will be more helpful than the philosophy itself.

4. *Emphasize that career education is a way of improving the school system's ability to prepare youth for work in ways that do not call for any great increases in the school budget.* Career education's emphasis on improving the basic academic skills, on providing youth with good work habits, basic economic understandings, and personally meaningful work values will be appealing to many employers who are influential members of the local Chamber of Commerce. Their willingness to participate may be enhanced if, in part, this is "sold" as a way of avoiding sizeable increases in the school budget itself.

5. *Picture career education as a vehicle for use by the business/industry community in impacting on and influencing the Education system.* Before asking Chamber of Commerce members to help, it is important to show them how to impact on the school system in general. The concerns of the local

Chamber of Commerce will not often be limited to career education—nor should they be. What educators regard as the business/industry person's primary area of expertise in no way should be thought of as synonymous with that person's concerns about the Education system. If career education can serve as a vehicle for helping the local Chamber of Commerce better express its broader concerns to the Education system, it will be a positive approach to take.

6. *Get the local Chamber of Commerce know why you need them, what you need them for, and how their efforts will effectively supplement the efforts of others.* The help any Education system is likely to get will likely be no more specific than the requests that it makes. No help can be expected unless the Education system itself is demonstrating that it is doing all that it can, but that the needs of youth are greater than can be met through efforts of the Education system alone.

7. *Be patient but persistent in efforts to involve the local Chamber of Commerce in career education.* A single contact made by an educator with a local Chamber of Commerce executive—or member—may well bring something less than an enthusiastic response. Remember, these are people with many other kinds of concerns over and beyond the education of youth. A local Chamber of Commerce cannot commit itself to any effort—such as career education—quickly or easily. The approval process is necessarily slow and deliberative in nature. The need to protect both the reputation and the limited resources of the Chamber precludes and quick response.

Unfortunately, the kinds of suggestions listed above are much easier for me to write than for you to implement. At the same time, it is felt that one or more of these can be followed by any of those involved in career education at the local, State, and/or National levels. If each of us does all that he/she can to follow these suggestions, chances of greatly increasing involvement of local Chambers of Commerce in career education will surely be enhanced.

#### The American Chamber of Commerce Executives

The American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) is *not* a formal part of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States. It is, rather, the professional society for Chamber of Commerce Executives in the USA and in Canada. Because Chamber of Commerce executives are its members, it is inevitable that close relationships exist between ACCE and COCUSA. Their close working relationships were evident in this seminar when participants asked for and were successful in bringing the President of ACCE to the

miniconference for part of one day. The ACCE discussion that took place at that time is an appropriate part of this monograph.

Begin in 1914, ACCE now has approximately 2,500 members. Its three major goals are: (a) increasing public understanding of *who* the Chamber executive is and what she/he does; (b) developing programmatic ideas that the Chamber Executive can replicate back in her/his own community; and (c) operation of a series of fringe benefit programs for Chamber of Commerce executives. In addition, at the National level, ACCE maintains contacts with many Federal agencies and with other national organizations whose interests overlap with those of the ACCE. The ACCE has, for example, been involved in public/private partnerships related to social issues, public growth policies, Education, youth unemployment, and a host of others.

One of the major activities in which ACCE is doing cooperatively with the COCUSA is encouraging ACCE members to participate in the COCUSA sponsored Summer Institutes for local Chamber executives. The curriculum for these Institutes is developed by COCUSA staff. In addition COCUSA contacts with seven different universities to actually conduct these Institutes each Summer. The prime function of ACCE in this arrangement is to encourage their members to attend and to profit from these Institutes. The Summer Institute program consists of a seven-year program leading to a certificate as a Certified Chamber Executive (CCE). The primary competencies acquired in this intensive Summer program is in the area of industrial development—the primary job of the Chamber executive.

In addition, ACCE sponsors each year, at the National, regional, State, and sub-state levels, information and exchange seminars aimed at helping ACCE members gain action ideas for use in their own local Chamber of Commerce. It is in meetings such as these that ACCE could be very helpful to career education advocates by placing career education on the agenda for discussion. Educators interested in involving their local Chamber of Commerce in career education will be interested in learning the extent to which the local Chamber executive with whom they relate is involved in ACCE activities.

#### Concluding Remarks

Participants in this seminar saw three major roles appropriate for local Chambers of Commerce to play in career education: (1) participating in inservice education efforts aimed at helping educators better understand the private enterprise system; (2) Coordinating efforts of the business/labor/industry community as they interact with the Education system in career education; and (3) Participating in gaining greater community understanding and

acceptance of the career education concept. Examples have been presented here illustrating ways in which particular local Chambers of Commerce have been and continue to be actively engaged in all three of these major roles.

The three roles are presented in this monograph in the order in which they were raised by the participants. In terms of appropriateness, it seems to me that each role is eminently appropriate but that, in listing them in the order presented here, the one that is relatively less appropriate is presented first and the one most obviously appropriate is presented last. There seems to me little doubt but that a local Chamber of Commerce could, provided a firm financial arrangement existed between the Chamber and the local School Board, undertake a great deal of educator inservice training associated with career education. In some communities, this will likely be a very logical arrangement under which to function while, in others, it will be inappropriate.

There is absolutely no doubt in my mind but that a local Chamber of Commerce could render a most valuable service to career education if it devoted part of its efforts to gaining greater community understanding and acceptance of the career education concept. The Chamber of Commerce is rightly concerned primarily about industrial and business development in the community. Certainly, a school system that moves to implement career education will be making some positive contributions to this Chamber goal both in terms of: (a) improving the general quality of Education; and (b) preparing youth for work in a better and more appropriate manner than can be accomplished through vocational education alone. In a typical community, the local Chamber of Commerce is one of the most prestigious and influential leadership voices in existence. For this organization to support those school boards who choose to embrace a career education effort will be helpful both to meeting the goals of the Chamber of Commerce and the goals of the Board of Education. Obviously, important as this role is, it should be assumed only in those communities where the local Board of Education has already adopted a career education policy.

The biggest question in my mind is whether or not the local Chamber of Commerce can appropriately play a role of coordinating the wide variety of business/labor/industry influences that seek to interact with the Education System in career education and in vocational education. The two biggest reasons why this might be a very appropriate goal towards which to strive are: (a) the Chamber of Commerce includes, among its member businesses, industries, and trade associations, almost all the influential ones with whom school systems seek to interact; and (b) while the Chamber of Commerce is not organized nor does it exist with a major goal of preparing youth for work (as do, for example, such organizations as the Junior Achievement Program or the Exploring Program of Scouting USA) it includes as members many businesses

and industries who are already deeply involved in such more direct efforts. Thus, there are solid reasons why the Chamber of Commerce could, in many communities, be regarded as the logical coordinating body. It is very obvious that some community group is going to have to assume that function.

The two basic reasons why, in some communities, it seems to me the local Chamber of Commerce might experience difficulty in playing such a role are: (a) I do not understand how the needed strong voice of organized labor can be made an appropriate part of the effort if the effort itself is under the direction of the Chamber of Commerce; and (b) there are some elements of the community, in addition to the business/labor /industry community, who must be a part of the total community career education effort.

As with any of the other operational decisions discussed in this monograph, the solution to this problem is going to have to be discovered by each community. That is the way it should be.

One of the most important things I feel I have learned from this group of miniconference participants is that the interests and concerns of the Chamber of Commerce, with respect to education, extend far beyond the area of career education. Career education can well serve as an effective vehicle for bringing about closer and more effective working relationships between the local Chamber of Commerce and the local Board of Education. If educators who are advocates of career education keep clearly in mind the broad goal of improving relationships between the Chamber of Commerce and the Education system, the goals of career education will be much better served than if such efforts concentrate on career education alone. To the extent that career education advocates in the school system are willing to allow themselves to be used in furthering an even broader set of goals, the specific goals of career education will surely be enhanced. To whatever extent we take a narrow, parochial view that concerns itself only with career education, we will have not done all that we could do to help either the youth or the communities we seek to serve.

## APPENDIX A

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## APPENDIX B

### Issues Raised by Participants

1. Definition of Career Education.
2. How career education fits into the curriculum?
3. How to get *complete* community involvement in career education?
4. How to locate the "actors" who are to do career when no special funds are available?
5. How to get educators involved in career education?
6. How to communicate the career education concept to the community?
7. Career Education and Vocation Education: What's the difference?
8. How to get school boards to support career education?
9. How to *coordinate* all the resources in the community with those of school systems?
10. How to get schools in a given community to work together toward common career education program goals?
11. How to fit economic education into career education in an infusion approach in classrooms?
12. How to control the diversity of demands educators are making of business?
13. Where is the "payoff" in terms of evaluation results for career education?
14. How to coordinate federally funded education/work efforts at the community level?
15. Where is the priority for career education in terms of other important things?
16. How to get more teachers to gain experience in industry?
17. How to get over teacher union concerns about released time for teachers
18. How to convince educators that business isn't trying to take over school systems?
19. How to convince the general community that career education is worthwhile?
20. How to solve "turf" problems that cause resistance from some academic teachers?
21. How to avoid over-promise of career education--i.e., trying to be all things to everyone?
22. How to show that career education *can* produce attitudinal changes in youth?
23. How to get State categorical aid for career education?
24. How to solve the P.L. problem in career education?
25. How to change attitudes of business persons about education--and educators?
26. How to get the business community to understand their responsibilities for education of today's youth?