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AN EXPERIENTIAL PROJECT EXAMINING
THE DUAL ROLES OF CURRICULUM DIRECTOR
AND ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

by

Michael M. Perry

A Project Report
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Specialist in Education
Department of Educational Leadership

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
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AN EXPERIENTIAL PROJECT EXAMINING
THE DUAL ROLES OF CURRICULUM DIRECTOR
AND ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

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Western Michigan University, 1984

The objective of this experiential project was to examine the dual roles of curriculum director and elementary principal as they are carried out by the same person in the Comstock Public Schools.

Major areas examined were: goal development and attainment, textbook adoption, creation of innovative programs, and decision-making procedures.

The major mode of operation was to observe, question, and interact. The intern participated in daily administrative activities suggested by the principal/curriculum director and the intern himself. It was discovered that educational administration is a complex process that requires refined organizational skills and a mastery of the ability to establish priorities. Also, it was determined that the proper budgeting of time must include the anticipation of unexpected events that may cause the administrator to delay or alter a specific task. Finally, it was concluded that flexibility and persistence are essential traits of the successful administrator.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Dr. Robert Hamet and the Comstock Board of Education for permitting me to conduct my experiential project at North Elementary School both during the school year and during summer vacation. I am particularly grateful to Mr. William Buhro, Director of Curriculum/Elementary Principal, for serving as my mentor and critic during the course of the internship. He was both objective and patient with me as I examined his dual roles in the field of administration. I am also grateful to Dr. Lawrence Schlack for his advice and encouragement in helping me construct and carry through on this project. Finally, I am indebted to my wife, Carol, for her countless hours of listening and for serving as a sounding board and creative resource person as I shared my thoughts and opinions concerning the fine art of educational leadership.

Michael M. Perry

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CHAPTER I

RATIONALE FOR THE EXPERIENCE

The intern chose to participate in an experiential internship to gain both knowledge and experience in the areas of curriculum leadership and elementary building administration. The intern received a Master's degree in Educational Leadership in 1975 but did not use it to obtain an administrative position at that time. Currently, the intern is a fifth grade teacher in the Comstock Public School District and has a strong desire to become an elementary principal. After much consultation with the intern's university advisor and building principal, it was decided that an experiential internship as partial fulfillment of the Specialist in Education Degree would help provide valuable training in the areas of educational leadership and building management.

A concomitant purpose of the internship was to acquire some expertise in developing curriculum materials suitable for use by other teachers as well as by the intern himself. Opportunities to direct the efforts of small task groups and enlist the help of teaching colleagues on curriculum projects were deemed useful experiences in understanding the process of curriculum leadership.

Since the intern is interested in both elementary administration and curriculum leadership, Comstock North Elementary School was a logical choice for the site of the majority of the internship. Mr. Buhro, the building principal, also serves as the Director of Curriculum for the Comstock Public Schools. He was most willing to serve as the intern's field supervisor.

Because the intern is also a full-time teacher, the internship experience was scheduled to take place after the regular school day and at special meetings held during the day when pertinent curriculum matters were being discussed. Commencing June 11, 1984, the intern began spending more lengthy time periods on the experiential project in an effort to satisfy objectives and be of service to the field supervisor. The central administration of the Comstock Public Schools provided the intern with support and valuable experience for the duration of the internship.

CHAPTER II

THE OBJECTIVES FOR THE EXPERIENCE

The intern, his field supervisor, and his university advisor established and agreed upon the following objectives for the experiential internship program:

Conceptual Objectives

1. To learn the goals of the school system and investigate sources used to develop them.
2. To understand how goals affect planning and decision-making.
3. To become aware of how building administrators establish personal and professional goals.
4. To develop an understanding of the role of the principal in the organization.
5. To acquire knowledge of the relationship between the school board and the administration.
6. To obtain knowledge skills needed to successfully exercise curriculum leadership.

Human Objectives

1. To recognize and utilize the potential of committees at the grade group level.
2. To gain awareness of the process of textbook selection and adoption.

3. To determine procedures used to place students in special education programs.
4. To investigate staff communication and cooperation as it relates to the welfare of the building.

Technical Objectives

1. To gain knowledge of the physical plant and how it is managed.
2. To acquire a basic working knowledge of the micro-computer and develop an understanding of available software that may benefit both students and faculty.
3. To gain a working knowledge of the school's supply needs.
4. To obtain knowledge concerning next year's (84-85) staffing needs.
5. To gain experience in writing and editing materials suitable for understanding by parents and students.
6. To gain experience writing and editing materials for teacher use.

CHAPTER III

ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS

The intern is of the opinion that he has met all of his objectives during the twenty-five week experiential internship. The major focus of the internship was on developing an understanding of the skills required of a successful elementary principal and/or curriculum director.

For a majority of the internship time, the intern was given the opportunity to act as either an interested observer or an active participant in administrative functions. The following administrative skills developed by these experiences and contacts are coordinated with appropriate log entries from Chapter IV and dates are cited for easy reference.

Conceptual Skills

Skill	Log Entry
The intern will be able to restate and explain goals and describe the process of goal development.	1/23 - 1/26 3/26 - 3/29 4/30 - 5/3
The intern will be able to display understanding of goals in long-range planning.	1/23 - 1/26 3/26 - 3/29 4/2 - 4/5
The intern will be able to clarify and place goals in realistic perspective.	3/26 - 3/29 4/1 - 5/3 5/7 - 5/10
The intern will be able to discuss with understanding the role of the principal in the school system.	1/30 - 2/2 3/26 - 3/29 4/9 - 4/12 5/7 - 5/10 6/11 - 6/15

Skill	Log Entry
The intern will be able to explain the school board/administration relationship and its ramifications.	5/7 - 5/10 5/21 - 5/24 6/4 - 6/7
The intern will be able to discuss and explain rationale for curriculum development and decision-making.	1/23 - 1/26 2/20 - 2/23 2/27 - 3/1 3/12 - 3/15 3/19 - 3/22 3/26 - 3/29 5/14 - 5/17

Human Skills

Skill	Log Entry
The intern will be able to assess the effectiveness of a group at offering useful suggestions and making collective decisions.	2/6 - 2/9 3/5 - 3/8 3/12 - 3/15 4/2 - 4/5
The intern will be able to explain the process of textbook selection and adoption.	2/6 - 2/9 2/20 - 2/23 3/19 - 3/22 5/21 - 5/24
The intern will be able to explain special education placement procedures to an administrator, a teacher and a parent.	1/16 - 1/19 5/14 - 5/17 5/24 - 5/31
The intern will be able to discuss and evaluate teacher attitudes toward each other and the building in general.	1/30 - 2/2 2/6 - 2/9 4/16 - 4/18 4/23 - 4/25

Technical Skills

Skill	Log Entry
The intern will be able to understand and explain procedures used to manage an elementary school building.	6/11 - 6/15 6/18 - 6/22 6/25 - 6/29

Skill	Log Entry
The intern will be able to understand the positive uses for the micro-computer and appropriate software at the elementary school level.	2/13 - 2/17 2/20 - 2/23 3/19 - 3/22 3/26 - 3/29 4/2 - 4/5
The intern will be able to order 1984-85 reading workbooks as early as January, 1984.	1/23 - 1/26 1/30 - 2/2
The intern will be able to diagram a staffing and class size plan that will best fit the needs of both students and teachers.	4/23 - 4/25 5/7 - 5/10
The intern will be able to explain in cogent terms, to be read and understood by students and parents, the rules and policies of the elementary school.	6/4 - 6/7 6/25 - 6/29
The intern will display the ability to inform teachers of their responsibilities through the use of the written word.	6/4 - 6/7 6/25 - 6/29

CHAPTER IV

LOG OF EXPERIENCES

January 9, 1984 through January 12, 1984

Total number of hours: 6

Description of experiences: This first week of my internship was filled with a variety of experiences that would provide a foundation for the remainder of project. First, I met with Mr. Buhro to discuss my responsibilities and schedule. As a result of my meeting with Mr. Buhro, I was then able to visit each classroom teacher (15 total) and explain my role as an intern, to both learn and to be of assistance. Finally, I had the opportunity to meet with a sales representative from the McDougal-Litell Corporation for the purpose of learning about their new language arts program. Since I am a member of the language arts selection committee, the information presented was of particular interest.

Analysis: The initial meeting between myself and Mr. Buhro did much to bolster my enthusiasm and allay my concerns. Even though the tasks to be completed seem monumental, my energy level seems surprisingly strong considering the fact that during each school day (Monday through Thursday) I will work on my experiential project after a full day of teaching fifth grade.

I learned that I will be permitted to have as much input as possible with regard to the functioning of the building and develop-

ment of curriculum. However, I, understandably, will not have access to personnel files or be a major factor in decisions concerning staff placement. It seems quite reasonable that the school system wants to provide me with a worthwhile experience and yet stay within legal parameters.

I was most interested to hear the presentation of the language arts sales representative because, from a curriculum director's perspective, the important (and costly) decision to adopt a specific text series may or may not be influenced by the expertise of a specific salesperson. I must be cognizant of this fact.

I was most enthused by the acceptance I received from my colleagues when I surveyed each concerning how I could be of help. I sense a supportive atmosphere that seems to prevail at most times in our building.

January 16, 1984 through January 19, 1984

Total number of hours: 6

Description of experience: The majority of this week was spent preparing for the arrival of the new resource room teacher who will be occupying the classroom next to mine. I discussed her presence in the building with Mr. Buhro. We attempted to analyze the best possible use of the resource room at North Elementary in accordance with state guidelines. The president of the teachers' union also met with me for the purpose of determining whether or not the addition of extra resource room students (to be moved from another building) would have an adverse effect on a given classroom's student-teacher

ratio. Finally, I had discussions with various teachers throughout the building to determine how we could all make the best use of the new resource room and to see if we currently had any regular education students who were in desperate need of testing for possible placement in the resource program.

Analysis: The addition of a new staff member and a new type of classroom seems to be spawning both enthusiasm and a bit of anxiety among some of the teachers. While it is obvious that a resource room will be able to provide the building with yet another tool in meeting basic educational needs, this change is not welcomed by all. In talking with teachers about this mid-year change, some expressed a concern that the personality of a class might be altered by the addition of new special education students coming from other buildings. It seems as though change can breed fear or anxiety in any given group of people. Some teachers even objected to the fact that our only empty classroom will be occupied again. These staff members apparently like the idea of having it available for storage and small group work.

January 23, 1984 through January 26, 1984

Total number of hours: 13.5

Description of experiences: I completed a reading of the official school board policy book and made some additions and deletions at the request of Mr. Buhro. Then I began planning a strategy to be used to effectively poll the entire faculty with respect to their workbook and other reading material needs for the 1984-85 school year. I

attended part one of a three part workshop at the Kalamazoo Valley Intermediate School District office entitled, "How to Create an Effective Curriculum for the Gifted Child." I chaired a grade group meeting (5th grade) for the purpose of evaluating and revising the current language arts curriculum guide. Finally, I compiled notes and attended a language arts curriculum committee meeting for the purpose of providing input from the fifth grade teachers' perspective.

Analysis: This busy week was filled with a variety of activities and for the first time I am beginning to understand what it feels like to have to carefully budget my time and determine which tasks need immediate attention and which can wait. I am also starting to get the opportunity to experience what it is like to split my duties between building administration and curriculum work.

Since much of what I am doing is new to me, I am being very methodical in my effort to avoid careless mistakes. For example, the survey form designed to inventory reading needs must reflect current unused materials in storage throughout the building. If I am off on my count, we will have spent too much money on workbooks. Needless to say, I revised my questionnaire several times.

Also, in preparation for the grade group meeting, I reviewed my materials from a Professional Development Seminar on the proper techniques for leading a small task group. All went well at the meeting and my peers expressed appreciation of my method of conducting a committee meeting.

January 30, 1984 through February 2, 1984

Total number of hours: 6

Description of experiences: Most of my after school intern time this week was devoted to meeting with each classroom teacher in the building on an individual basis for the purpose of determining reading materials needed for the 1984-85 school year. We discussed materials on hand and possible class sizes for next year. Allowances were given for retentions and the arrival and departure of students from our district. Mr. Buhro and I determined that it would be reasonable to place an order for workbooks and skill tests that would be approximately ten percent above our basic needs. Teachers were reminded to send partially completed workbooks and tests on to a student's new teacher if that particular student happened to be in a reading group that had not completed a basal text.

Analysis: The task of meeting with and polling each teacher proved to be both enlightening and time-consuming. Since I am a member of the staff and am also functioning in a quasi-administrative capacity, our conversations got off on a variety of tangents. I received requests for additional materials and was told all about little used or "useless" materials. The pros and cons of various record keeping techniques were also discussed. For the most part, our teachers at North are a proud group of educators who work hard to maintain high standards for themselves and their students. Reading is the core of the curriculum at all elementary grade levels and most teachers will gladly discuss how it is "properly taught." Taking an interest in what

a particular teacher is doing seems to open lines of communication and motivate the need to discuss the profession in general. The simple task of inquiring about reading workbooks taught me more about the opinions and techniques of some of my colleagues than I ever could have imagined.

February 6, 1984 through February 9, 1984

Total number of hours: 6

Description of experiences: I spent time working with a committee of upper elementary teachers in developing an effective way of sponsoring a parent "information" night with emphasis on helping the student at home. In particular, a need was established for a seminar on the construction and presentation of projects to be entered in the district's upcoming science fair. Responsibility for providing materials, publishing guidelines, and delivering lectures was delegated to various members of the group. Also, I spent time reviewing sample textbooks that are starting to inundate the language arts curriculum committee. It has become my responsibility to preview all available fifth grade materials and be prepared to offer an opinion as to which series of books best meets the fifth grade curricular needs of our district.

Analysis: The fourth and fifth grade teachers at North work quite well together and it is relatively easy to enlist volunteers for work when the student's progress is at stake. Since the Science Fair is a district-wide competition, it is only natural that North teachers want

their students to give the best possible showing. However, since it is illegal to receive teacher help or work on the project during class time, the quality of the project is totally dependent on the motivation and creativity of both student and parent. Hence, it becomes important that parents are informed of the best "legal" methods for assisting their child.

The more I see of the language arts texts and workbooks, the more confused I become as to what is going to be best for Comstock. It becomes apparent that a standardized form is going to have to be used as an evaluative tool. Thus far, I have eleven language arts series to investigate and critique.

January 13, 1984 through February 17, 1984

Total number of hours: 8

Description of experiences: I attended a "hands on" display at the high school for the purpose of becoming familiar with and evaluating software that might be appropriate for use at the upper elementary level. I had the opportunity to use one of the many micro-computers at the high school and to experiment with materials designed for use in the areas of math, social studies, spelling, and language arts. Also, I spent much time familiarizing myself with the proper operation of our school's own Apple IIe micro-computer. Finally, I attended part one of a segmented workshop sponsored by the school system designed to give employees practical experience in the use of the word processor as a teaching tool.

Analysis: The potential that the micro-computer has for intimidation of this intern is beginning to fade at a rapid pace. I am amazed at what a versatile tool and useful teaching aid the Apple IIe has proven to be. At first, I was nervous at the prospect of a screen talking back to me and explaining that I had made a mistake or was granted permission to move on to the next step. However, once I came to understand that the machine was just a machine and nothing more and that I was not going to break it, learning became fun. I am now at a point where I am able to be of help to other teachers in our building as a resource person available to give private therapy sessions on the proper use of software and on how to deal with irrational fear of the keyboard. I realize that my knowledge of the micro-computer is still quite superficial, but I am learning fast and am enthused.

February 20, 1984 through February 23, 1984

Total number of hours: 8

Description of experiences: I attended a presentation concerning our district's pre-kindergarten program called the "Young Fives." The speakers explained how the participants in the program are identified using the Gesell School Readiness Test. I reviewed the programmed text used in my micro-computer class and attended session two on the use of the word processor. I continued working on the language arts selection committee by gathering sample texts and distributing them to appropriate committee members. Finally, I completed editing of the fifth grade curriculum guide (language arts) and attended yet another meeting of the selection committee.

Analysis: Many of my projects are beginning to take shape and I am starting to feel much more organized. The most difficult task at hand is to continue to do a good job with my students and not let my thoughts of the internship interfere with my role as a classroom teacher. Since North Elementary is also the curriculum office, all matters concerning textbook selection are directed here. As a result, I have become sort of a "clearinghouse" on curriculum matters that deal with language arts text selection. Even though I am not chairing the committee, my internship and proximity to all materials make me a likely choice to assume a great deal of responsibility. I am constantly receiving long distance calls from sales representatives and requests from fellow committee members for materials and information. This entire process of textbook selection is both complicated and fascinating.

February 27, 1984 through March 1, 1984

Total number of hours: 12

Description of experiences: This week I completed the order form for reading materials for the entire building and shared my work with Mr. Buhro before mailing it to the Houghton Mifflin Company. I continued to mail language arts textbooks from the curriculum office to committee members throughout the district. I also attended part two of the all day workshop at K.V.I.S.D. designed to provide direction concerning the proper way to both alter existing curriculums and create new programs aimed at the special needs of gifted children.

During the workshop I participated in small group exercises in which I examined existing school curriculums (Comstock) and attempted to both add and delete objectives and resources that would be more applicable to a gifted program at the upper elementary level.

Analysis: The job of making sure that all of my language arts colleagues have a chance to preview and evaluate all eleven textbooks under consideration seems never-ending. I am constantly being interrupted from other tasks to stop and handle some administrative aspect of the language arts project. It is becoming increasingly apparent to me that an administrator must not take for granted that he/she will have any given block of time available during the school day to work on a specific task without interruption. I am learning the proper techniques of time management by doing, and not by just observing. Ever as I sit at the workshop on curriculum design for the gifted, I am able to use spare moments to think and plan for the rest of the semester. The small group work has been made easier for me by virtue of the fact that I am quite familiar with every aspect of Comstock's current language arts curriculum.

March 5, 1984 through March 8, 1984

Total number of hours: 4

Description of experiences: Time was spent reviewing materials and attending meetings. I continued to review language arts textbooks and evaluate them based on a checksheet/questionnaire I created and submitted to the committee for use. Also, I reviewed and evaluated

the condition of our school's book and supply room for the purpose of familiarizing myself with types and amounts of supplies which will have to be ordered in June. Finally, I attended a meeting of grade group leaders and heard presentations on the current teacher evaluation form and the proposed adoption of a new spelling program for the district.

Analysis: Since this was the week of mid-winter break at Comstock, I was not able to complete as many after-school intern hours as I would have liked. However, I did manage to amass some valuable background information that should benefit me later this spring when I take on the task of determining supply needs and filling out order forms. The supply room has become somewhat of a mess and I am going to recommend to Mr. Buhro that we meet with the faculty this fall to establish some guidelines for its proper use. Too often it becomes cluttered with outdated textbooks and little-used materials that would be better at a rummage sale or in a private home. The organization of the storage room looms as an ambitious project with the potential to thoroughly indoctrinate me as to the supply needs of the building.

March 12, 1984 through March 15, 1984

Total number of hours: 4

Description of experiences: Today I completed what I hope to be the final installment of mailings of language arts materials to my colleagues on the language arts selection committee. I reviewed,

checked, counted, and stored all of the Houghton Mifflin reading workbooks to be used throughout the entire building in the fall of 1984. I prepared for and led a grade group (5th) meeting concerning a wide variety of topics. Our group heard a report on the method used to select and adopt the new spelling program. We also came to agreement on the method and criteria we would use for marking students' reading grades on quarterly progress reports. Finally, we spent a great deal of time in a "brainstorming" session coming up with reasons why the district should and should not reorganize its elementary schools by creating two upper and two lower elementary buildings.

Analysis: The leading of small task groups becomes more fun and more productive as I gain experience. In the case of the fifth grade teachers, our meetings continue to be amiable and informative. For the most part, we think along the same lines and have little trouble reaching agreement on a specific topic.

When discussing the reorganization of the elementary buildings, the group was overwhelmingly opposed to such a move. I led the brainstorming session and also served as recorder of ideas. The "con" side of my ledger was quickly filled with negative thoughts, while the "pro" side was rather sparse. Obviously, the fifth grade teachers have no desire to move.

March 19, 1984 through March 22, 1984

Description of experiences: 7

Description of experiences: I revised, edited, and organized my notes from the March 18th grade group meeting and submitted them to Mr. Buhro. I met with Mr. Buhro to discuss the software needs of the building and the possibility of sending me to one or two software outlets to preview material. Then I attended the first portion of a segmented after-school class on the P.M.S. filing system that is designed to assist in record keeping and graph display. I also attended a language arts curriculum committee meeting for the purpose of selecting the three finalists in our search for a new K-8 language arts series.

Analysis: The subject of the micro-computer seems to come up in conversation around our building more and more often. I am enthused about how my base of computer knowledge is expanding. I am now able to read software instruction booklets with reasonable fluency. It has been an enjoyable experience helping students and fellow teachers become indoctrinated to the handy little tool.

The curriculum meeting, convened for the purpose of narrowing our eleven book options to three, went surprisingly well. Apparently all of the committee members had done a thorough job of researching each text because there were clearly four favorites that seemed to outclass the rest of the field. The final three choices were made with little or not controversy, and, as far as I could tell, no hurt feelings. Our next step is to invite sales representatives from each potential

selection to give a presentation on the merits of their textbook series.

March 26, 1984 through March 29, 1984

Total number of hours: 7.5

Description of experiences: I attended the final session of the workshop at K.V.I.S.D. on designing a curriculum to meet the needs of the gifted child. I attended session number two of the micro-computer class pertaining to the use of the P.F.S. filing system. Then I met with Mr. Buhro to discuss a variety of topics ranging from the newly devised merit pay system for administrators to options available to me with respect to a career in administration.

Analysis: Not only am I gaining much information at both the gifted workshop and micro-computer class, but I am finding the opportunity to be around other teachers and administrators to be a valuable learning experience. Observing educators in the process of learning is much like observing a class of fifth graders. Some are interested, others desire to dominate the class setting, and still others withdraw and quietly socialize with their friends. Watching educators in the role of students helps me keep my perspective on where I am headed, and on how much I desire to be an administrator.

I believe that teachers, like students, have the potential to be attentive, motivated, and enjoy learning if the lesson is planned and presented properly. It is often the responsibility of administration to present inservice and continuing education programs to staff and

faculty. I would enjoy that responsibility because I believe it has great potential for providing pertinent learning. This internship is sharpening my desire to couple what I know about successful teaching techniques with what I believe are growing organizational skills and to use them as an educational leader.

April 2, 1984 through April 5, 1984

Total number of hours: 6

Description of experiences: I prepared for a planning meeting with the superintendent on inservice needs of the district by discussing specific elementary needs with various teachers at North Elementary. Then I met with the superintendent and all other administrators and department heads and discussed each area's specific needs. Following the discussion I recorded all pertinent input and looked for common areas of interests throughout the district. Finally, I attended the final session of the P.F.S. micro-computer class.

Analysis: Once again it was a valuable learning experience for me to be involved with a large gathering of teachers and administrators who are all approaching a common goal from a broad spectrum of interests and experiences. Although the group got along quite well and seemed to have a productive meeting, the differences in priorities between secondary and elementary representatives quickly became obvious.

The majority of inservice needs voiced by the secondary people were aimed at refinement of teaching/technical skills such as computer usage and development of new classes to motivate 8th and

9th graders. However, the elementary representatives were more interested in the development of human relations skills such as innovative methods of handling difficult conferences and positive approaches to discipline. Regardless of these differences, it is apparent that we have a competent staff in Comstock that is still eager and willing to learn, and a central administration that is willing to provide learning opportunities.

April 9, 1984 through April 12, 1984

Total number of hours: 3

Description of experiences: I practiced with the Apple IIe micro-computer by both previewing new software to be put into use by upper elementary age children and by using available programmed texts to refine skills I learned at two recently completed after-school workshops. I also met with Mr. Buhro to discuss the "hows and whys" of school board policy and the complexities of the dual positions of principal and curriculum director.

Analysis: Even though I missed two days of school this week with a bout of the flu, my internship continues to be a most valuable experience. Whether it be quiet time with the micro-computer or meaningful dialogue with Mr. Buhro about what it is like to be an administrator, I am exhilarated each day knowing that I, too, along with my students, have learned something new!

April 16, 1984 through April 18, 1984

Total number of hours: 4.5

Description of experiences: I reviewed our last school improvement project and began formulating a plan to use the same techniques and begin a new endeavor of worth to the building as a whole. I met with Mr. Buhro to discuss "Grandparent's Day" and my involvement with its planning. Then I began contacting other teachers in the building to enlist help on both a school improvement plan and on a committee to plan a special day to welcome grandparents.

Analysis: At first I was reluctant to ask for help from my colleagues on specific projects because I was not doing it from the position of administrator. However, I discovered that a little bit of enthusiasm goes a long way when mixed with direct personal contact. Often I have witnessed little or no response from a group to a request for volunteers to serve on a committee or attend an after-school function. However, when approached on an individual basis, teachers are more willing to offer both help and suggestions. I approached all of my committee members individually and received nothing but positive responses to my requests for help.

April 23, 1984 through April 25, 1984

Total number of hours: 10

Description of experiences: I spent a portion of two days during this spring vacation week in solitude, refining my skills on the micro-computer and planning appropriate activities for Grandparent's

Day. I spoke with Mr. Buhro and two teachers who are organizing the day and decided that we will have a lower elementary Workshop Way phonics presentation and an upper elementary consumer math lesson, which I will present. I had yet another discussion with Mr. Buhro concerning both staffing needs and class numbers and sizes for the 1984-85 school year.

Analysis: Grandparent's Day is beginning to take shape and it looks like it will be an enjoyable event. At least 50% of the students have indicated they will have grandparents or elderly neighbors visiting our building. Our Parent Teacher Group has agreed to provide bud roses for each grandparent as well as refreshments. Each teacher has agreed to be as flexible as possible during that day and adjust his/her lesson plans to allow for the influx of visitors. I am looking forward to the day with great anticipation since I believe our building has reason to be proud of its product.

April 30, 1984 through May 3, 1984

Total number of hours: 6

Description of experiences: I began attempting to understand the process by which goals of the school system and goals of individual administrators are developed. To do so, I read the statement of goals for the school system for the past five years. I had a discussion with three different administrators concerning how their personal goals affect the way they manage their specific buildings. Then I reread my own personal goals for the last five years of teaching and

contemplated how I developed them.

Analysis: As far as I can tell at this point, the development of both personal and system-wide goals is based on an assessment of needs and deficiencies. It appears as though the successful administrator must possess the ability to analyze both the strong and weak points of either a specific program or an entire system.

This ability to evaluate and project a legitimate need for change should also be present in the administrator from an introspective point of view. I must have the ability to look at myself and determine what needs to be either altered or introduced.

In retrospect, I have been doing this in my classroom for a number of years with success. Each year I have been able to both reflect on previous experiences and survey current trends that be of worth in order to set attainable goals for myself and my students. I don't see a great deal of differences between what I am doing now in my classroom and what our district is doing to evaluate and set annual goals. I am encouraged by this fact.

May 7, 1984 through May 10, 1984

Total number of hours: 5.5

Description of experiences: I reviewed both personal and system-wide goals and attempted to determine if they had been attained. I discussed with Mr. Buhro the "Job Analysis Worksheet" used to evaluate administrators and determine their salary rate for the next school year. Attended the Board of Education monthly meeting for the purpose of understanding the relationship between the Board and

our school system. I had also hoped to be able to gain an understanding of how the Board communicates with one another and understands the complexities involved in the efficient management of a school system.

Analysis: I discovered that the goals of the school system and personal goals of individual administrators are closely related to the annual evaluation of each administrator and thus have a direct bearing on his/her salary and job status. The administrator's "Job Analysis Worksheet" lists major accountabilities such as balanced curriculum, effective personnel management, positive community relationships, and properly managed financial resources. However, the worksheet also provides standards (expressed in quality, quantity, and cost of time) used to measure performance. In addition to major accountabilities, the worksheet includes a list of both system-wide and personal goals to be attained for a given school year. When administrators have an annual evaluation conference, the worksheet is a major tool in determining degree of success.

The Board of Education meeting was, for the most part, routine. The majority of the time was spent hearing reports on proposed textbook adoptions and course offerings at the high school. I have noticed that the personalities of Board members appear to determine the direction of discussion and length of time spent on a particular topic. Some members appear content to rely on administrative recommendations, while others prefer to question and sometimes belabor each topic on the agenda. I will look for this

pattern of behavior at subsequent meetings.

May 14, 1984 through May 17, 1984

Total number of hours: 9

Description of experiences: I began to more thoroughly understand the process of placing a student in the special education program by reviewing necessary forms to be completed and having discussions on the subject with the principal, school social worker, and our building's resource room teacher. I attended the final meeting of the language arts curriculum committee at which time we made our decision on a single language series to be proposed for adoption for the 1984-85 school year. I attended an afternoon meeting of the K-12 curriculum council, at which time our recommendation (Houghton-Mifflin) was presented for both scrutiny and approval. I fielded questions from the council on our committee's selection procedure and the quality of the choice.

Analysis: As I learn more about the complexities and "red tape" involved in going through the proper channels to get a child placed in a special education program, I become more keenly aware of how the system has built-in checks to avoid accepting the student who behaves in either a disruptive or undermotivated way in the regular classroom but who possesses both ability and potential. Regular classroom teachers are often critical of the special education placement system when a particularly difficult student of theirs does not qualify. However, when one views the available number of

openings and state mandated guidelines from the special education perspective, it is possible to become more sympathetic.

I am also gaining a great deal more understanding of the complexities involved in textbook selection and adoption. Even though our committee thoroughly researched all available options and picked what was deemed to be the best possible choice, the K-12 committee did not merely "rubber stamp" our decision. Instead, we were questioned on matters of readability, scope and sequence, and even on durability of the texts. After a complete and objective inquiry session, our choice was approved and is now ready to present to the Comstock Board of Education for formal adoption.

May 21, 1984 through May 24, 1984

Total number of hours: 8

Description of experiences: I attended a special meeting of the Board of Education. The Board adopted the 1984-85 operational budget, approved various curriculum changes, approved the revised teacher evaluation instrument and a number of textbook adoptions including the language arts selection for the K-8 language curriculum. I continued to work on the development of an interim progress report by interviewing upper elementary teachers in an effort to determine reasons for teacher frustration and a lack of communication between parent and school. I began attempting to gather sample copies of interim progress reports from other school districts to better acquaint myself with what might be appropriate for North Elementary School.

Analysis: I was both relieved and surprised at the reaction of the Board of Education to Mr. Stuckey's (our committee chairperson) presentation concerning the "hows and whys" of our decision to recommend the Houghton-Mifflin language series. Mr. Stuckey presented the material in an organized, objective manner and invited questions. The Board seemed pleased and unanimously accepted our proposal with no hesitation.

In light of the critical comments and negative questions I have seen directed at other text proposals, I continue to be amazed at the unpredictability of what appears to be a routine request. I must keep in mind that, when dealing with either a group of professional educators or a group of lay people representing a decision-making body, the administrator must never assume the expected outcome will materialize.

May 29, 1984 through May 31, 1984

Total number of hours: 4

Description of experiences: I attended an educational placement meeting concerning a student slated to be in fifth grade and who has been classified as emotionally impaired. At the meeting I observed the interaction between the parents, social worker, principal, and fourth grade teacher. Then I discussed the outcome and dynamics of the meeting with the principal and the school social worker.

Analysis: I have attended placement meetings as an interested participant (classroom teacher), but never as an objective observer. I

was most impressed with the calm, caring manner with which the school social worker and principal kept the meeting from becoming too emotional and insisted on keeping the best interests of the student of utmost importance. I could sense hostility initially between the parents and the classroom teacher. However, as all parties concerned concentrated on the issue of the best possible educational program for the child, a more rational atmosphere prevailed.

In talking with Mr. Buhro and the school social worker, I discovered that often even the most negative parent will eventually accept a special education placement recommendation if presented with objective test results in a clam atmosphere which emphasizes the best interests of the child. I discovered that when attempting to design a program for a potential special education student, pointing fingers or attempting to fix blame for the creation of the problem on either home or school is an unproductive maneuver that will do nothing but create even more hard feelings.

June 4, 1984 through June 7, 1984

Total number of hours: 7

Description of experiences: I attended a special meeting of the Board of Education designed to hear reports on more curriculum projects and proposed class changes. I met with Mr. Buhro to evaluate the status of projects in progress and to plan my activities for the next four weeks when the school will be devoid of students and internship time more readily available. I completed a rough draft of the interim progress report and shared it with several teachers who are not

members of the school improvement committee.

Analysis: This last week with students was spent tying up loose ends with various teaching colleagues who will not be quite so accessible when the summer vacation begins. It was important for me to receive some feedback on the interim progress report before anymore serious effort goes into its construction. I would like this communication tool to become a permanent fixture in the 4th and 5th grades and thus am trying to adjust the format so that it will be appliclable in a variety of situations and will point out outstanding progress as well as deficiencies.

Basically, the progress report is the result of a number of frustrations from upper elementary teachers that working parents are difficult to contact by phone and then complain when they are not kept informed of their child's poor performance until the report card arrives home. Needless to say, I had very little trouble finding committee members for this school improvement project.

June 11, 1984 through June 15, 1984

Total number of hours: 30

Description of experiences: I attended the special meeting of the Board of Education designed to complete end of the year business concerning curriculum and personnel matters. I completed the interim progress report and presented it to Mr. Buhro for his review and approval. I spent a morning at the James River Corporation helping the Student Council earn money. Then I began reorganizing the paper

and supply storage room and making decisions about materials that have not been used for a number of years.

Analysis: Now that school is out for the summer, I have the opportunity to concentrate on a variety of tasks without the constant thought of tomorrow's lesson in math or the progress of a specific student who is having problems in reading. I look forward to spending full days at school and having the opportunity to lunch with and question both the school secretary and custodian about the operation of the building.

The June 11th board meeting was a rather sad occasion. Midway through the meeting it was announced that a small millage proposal was defeated and one of the more active supportive board members had been defeated in a bid for reelection. To the credit of Dr. Hamet and the members of the board, they acknowledged the bad news with little show of emotion and continued on with the agenda as though it were a normal evening in Comstock.

Much of my desk time this week was spent putting the final touches on the interim progress report. One of my committee members was kind enough to come back to school so that we could finalize the project. She happens to be fourth grade teacher who is interested in using the report as soon as possible. Mr. Buhro was pleased with the report form and our final draft was submitted to the school secretary for typing and duplication.

I learned this week that the job of school principal involves much more than the ability to use one's mind in an organized,

productive fashion. Sometimes principals must get dirty. About eight times a year Mr. Buhro must see to it that the Student Council Paper Bus is driven to James River Corporation and unloaded at the recycling center. The result of this effort usually nets about \$150.00 profit for the Student Council fund, and, ultimately, for the good of the school.

I managed to enlist the aid of two former students and a parent. The task took us most of a morning and proved to be both tedious and enlightening as we unloaded bags of papers and magazines from an old school bus that was packed to capacity. I began to realize that many productive acts performed by the building principal go completely unnoticed by all but a few and yet may still have an impact on the well-being of the staff and students.

June 18, 1984 through June 22, 1984

Total number of hours: 30

Description of experiences: This week was spent evaluating the current supply needs of the faculty and staff with respect to paper and other writing and craft products. I reorganized the paper supply room and moved little-used materials to other storage areas. Then I reported to the principal on the status of reading materials that are not readily accessible. I was able to make decisions on new locations to be used for the storage of basal reading texts and supplemental reading materials. Next I cleaned out and prepared a rarely used room in anticipation of its use as a special education office in the fall of 1984. I worked closely with the custodian in evaluating the

availability and potential for further use of all storage areas in the building.

Analysis: This week's activities emphasized both mental and physical exertion. I began the week by conducting a complete inventory/evaluation of every storage area in the school, including the newly constructed garage adjacent to the building. I discovered that there were many boxes of used textbooks and other teaching materials that had the potential to be used as supplemental material if it were more readily available to the staff. So, I set about the task of unpacking every box I could find and organized the materials on movable shelf units that were not being used by the library. All materials that were found unsuitable because of age or a damaged condition were repacked and labeled as items for sale at the school district's annual garage sale. I am very pleased with the quality of much of the material I was able to put on open shelving for the faculty to see. It is my intention to place these movable stacks of materials in the faculty room where they can be investigated with ease and serve as a constant reminder that they are available.

I have also moved all of the Houghton-Mifflin textbooks from an unused office area to the faculty lounge. Since our lounge is a converted classroom, there is ample shelving space for basal texts. Mr. Buhro anticipates that the unused office will be pressed into service next fall and he has asked me to make some decisions and take action on the placement of materials currently stored in the office. I am pleased with my decision to use the lounge as a teacher

resource center as well as a place to gather and socialize.

June 25, 1984 through June 19, 1984

Total number of hours: 30

Description of experiences: I spent this last week on the internship doing research, thinking, taking notes, and organizing materials concerning what I think students, teachers, and parents should know about policies and available services at North Elementary School. Then I rewrote both the parent/student handbook and the teacher handbook.

Analysis: This last week has been a fitting culmination to my internship because I was able to put much of what I have learned about both the physical plant and school policy of North Elementary to practical use. It was gratifying to realize that I have become so familiar with the way the building and staff are intended to service the needs of that district, that I was able to update the current handbooks by making both additions and deletions pertinent to the 1984-85 school year.

The current policy on marking report cards and rationale for retention were added to the text of both handbooks. Recently adopted school board policy concerning disclosure of student information and the dispensing of medicine were also included. Mr. Buhro inspected my finished product and approved. Both handbooks will be ready for distribution this fall.

I began this internship in January with the intention of gaining

a better understanding of the dual roles of curriculum director and elementary principal. From my perspective, I have achieved my goal. Both administrative positions require organizational and management skills that exceed my preconceived notions. I am most impressed with the way Mr. Buhro is able to budget his time and manage both the building and the curriculum department.

These past twenty-five weeks have been hectic and frustrating at times, but also exhilarating. I have learned more about educational administration than I imagined possible and am more determined than ever to seek an administrative position of my own.

CHAPTER V

EVALUATION

The intern is of the opinion that his internship in the Comstock Public Schools has been a complete success. Not only did the intern satisfy all of the objectives stated in the prospectus, but he was also privileged to be involved in countless other unexpected experiences that broadened his scope of knowledge and helped put the difficult job of educational leadership into its proper perspective.

The full cooperation of Mr. Buhro and all other Comstock administrators helped alleviate uncertainties and potential anxieties that might have impeded the intern's learning process. The prevailing feeling of acceptance amongst the administrative team encouraged the intern to both question more and to work harder.

The teachers at North Elementary School continued to treat the intern with the same warm acceptance to which he has been accustomed for the past eight years. The willingness of North's faculty to volunteer for committee work and offer pertinent opinions concerning curriculum matters helped facilitate the attainment of stated objectives.

The support of Dr. Schlack helped provide the intern with the necessary motivation to complete the 240 hour internship on both a part-time and full-time basis. Not only has the intern felt exhilarated by the learning experiences encountered during the internship, but he has also felt more in touch than ever with the field of education since returning to graduate school.

The intern believes that the experiential internship provides a vehicle for practical experience that cannot be duplicated by another program. He has the highest regard for the organizational skills involved in designing the program for the flexibility of the Educational Leadership Department which gave him the opportunity to create an internship that would meet his specific needs.

APPENDIX

SPECIALIST INTERNSHIP PROSPECTUS

Intern: Michael M. Perry

Sponsoring Organization: Comstock Public Schools

Field Supervisor: Mr. Williams Buhro, Principal and Curriculum
Director, Comstock Public Schools

University Advisor: Dr. Lawrence Schlack,
Western Michigan University

Major Focus of Experience: Experiential project examining the roles of elementary principal and curriculum director.

Duration: 26 weeks, commencing January 9, 1984

Rationale: Whether it be in the capacity of building principal or director of curriculum development, an educational leader must enlist the cooperation of both administration and staff in order to attain appropriate goals. It is the responsibility of all parties concerned to assimilate these goals and work toward them during the daily routine of the educational setting. In most cases, proper leadership skills will have a direct bearing on the success or failure of a given project. The effective leader must possess a clear understanding of all human, conceptual, and technical skills required for successful attainment of district-wide goals and proper maintenance of the status quo.

During the course of this internship, it is expected that the intern

will obtain a strong base of knowledge concerning the administrative structure of the Comstock Public Schools with respect to the following items:

1. Board policy and philosophy
2. Discipline procedures
3. Goal development and attainment
4. Budgeting of administrative time
5. Textbook adoption
6. Creation of innovative programs
7. Decision-making procedures

Throughout this internship, the intern will gain experience by reading, observing, investigating, doing committee work, and acting in a leadership capacity whenever appropriate. It is expected that the internship will both educate and motivate the intern, while broadening his base of experience. It is also expected that the intern will be of some value to the Comstock Public Schools in whatever capacity deemed appropriate.

PROJECTED NATURE OF INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

OBJECTIVES	EXPERIENCES & CONTACTS	TERMINAL SKILLS
A. <u>CONCEPTUAL</u>	The intern will -	The intern will be able to -
1. To <u>learn</u> the goals of the school system and investigate sources used to develop them.	<u>read</u> and <u>assimilate</u> statement of goals; <u>interview</u> and <u>observe</u> source of statements.	<u>restate</u> and <u>explain</u> goals and describe the process of goal development.
2. To <u>understand</u> how goals affect planning and decision-making.	<u>discuss</u> goals with field supervisor and other administrators.	<u>clarify</u> and <u>place</u> goals in realistic perspective.
3. To <u>become aware</u> of how building administrators establish personal and professional goals.	<u>participate</u> in meetings; <u>discuss</u> with administrators and teachers.	<u>display</u> understanding of goals in long-range planning.
4. To <u>develop</u> understanding of the role of principal in the organization.	<u>observe</u> , <u>interview</u> , <u>read</u> current research, <u>make assumptions</u> based on fact.	<u>discuss</u> (with understanding) findings with administrators.
5. To <u>acquire</u> knowledge of the relationship between the school board and the administration.	<u>attend</u> monthly meetings of the school board and <u>learn</u> through observation.	<u>explain</u> the board/administration relationship and its ramifications.
6. To <u>obtain</u> knowledge of skills needed to successfully exercise curriculum leadership.	<u>observe</u> techniques used for curriculum planning and development.	<u>discuss</u> and <u>explain</u> rationale for curriculum development and decision-making.

OBJECTIVES	EXPERIENCES & CONTACTS	TERMINAL SKILLS
B. <u>HUMAN</u>	The intern will -	The intern will be able to -
1. To <u>recognize</u> and <u>utilize</u> the potential of committees at the grade group level.	<u>serve</u> as grade group chairman and <u>conduct</u> periodic meetings concerning appropriate curriculum matters	<u>assess</u> the effectiveness of a group at offering useful suggestions and making collective decisions.
2. To <u>gain awareness</u> as to the process of textbook selection and adoption.	<u>serve</u> on a committee charged with the task of recommending a new text for adoption.	<u>explain</u> the selection process.
3. To <u>determine</u> procedures used to place students in special education programs.	<u>attend</u> Educational Planning and Placement Meetings, as an observer; <u>discuss</u> procedures with "Special Ed." personnel.	<u>explain</u> placement procedures to an administrator, a teacher, and a parent.
4. To <u>investigate</u> staff communications and cooperation as it relates to the welfare of the building.	<u>assist</u> in the development of a building project under the Michigan School Improvement Program.	<u>discuss</u> and <u>evaluate</u> teacher attitudes toward each other and the building in general.
C. <u>TECHNICAL</u>	The intern will -	The intern will be able to -
1. To <u>gain</u> knowledge of the physical plant and how it is managed.	<u>observe, question, and discuss</u> methods with appropriate personnel.	<u>understand</u> and <u>explain</u> procedures used to manage an elementary building.

OBJECTIVES	EXPERIENCES & CONTACTS	TERMINAL SKILLS
C. <u>TECHNICAL</u>	The intern will -	The intern will be able to -
2. To <u>acquire</u> a basic working knowledge of the micro-computer and <u>develop</u> an understanding of available software that may benefit both students and faculty.	<u>practice</u> with the micro-computer and available programmed texts; <u>lead</u> selection of computer software and encourage teacher experimentation.	<u>develop</u> the ability to enter and retrieve pertinent administrative information, i.e. test scores and other student information; to <u>understand</u> and <u>explain</u> the <u>positive uses for computer software in the school setting.</u>
3. To <u>gain</u> a working knowledge of the school's supply needs.	<u>investigate</u> the current needs of the building in relation to available funds.	<u>order 84-85 reading workbooks as early as January, 1984.</u>
4. To <u>obtain</u> knowledge concerning next year's (84- 85) staffing needs.	<u>compare</u> the projected enrollment with available staff and their teaching requests.	<u>diagram a building placement that will best fit the needs of both students and teachers.</u>
5. To <u>gain experience</u> writing and editing materials suitable for understanding by parents and students.	<u>develop</u> a parent handbook to explain rules and regulations of the school.	<u>explain in cogent terms rules and regulations of the elementary school.</u>
6. To <u>gain experience</u> writing and editing materials for teacher use.	<u>revise and rewrite</u> the teacher handbook.	<u>display the ability to inform teachers of their responsibilities through the use of the written word.</u>

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