

*Central  
files*

# Restructuring and Revitalizing

## The Chicago Public Schools

In 1988

Recommendations of the Chicago Teachers Union  
for  
Educational Reform and School-Based Management

Published by  
Chicago Teachers Union

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**36-6. A voluntary career opportunity category shall be available to teachers at the completion of their seventh year of teaching as a regularly assigned and certificated teacher.**

**All teachers who volunteer for and are selected to assume any of the following responsibilities shall be compensated at the rate**

**of 15% of their regular salary. Teachers so selected, under the considerations enumerated below, agree to provide local school and/or district assistance in in-service development, staff development, curriculum and instruction improvement, department chairpersonship and grade level chairpersonship, peer assistance, intern training and/or other duties through additional service as necessary up to four weeks or an equivalent of time over and above the regular day or school year as determined locally. At least 50% of the regular day for these teachers shall be spent in direct classroom instruction.**

**Assignment to the above teaching position shall be made on the basis of the following considerations:**

- 1. written application;**
- 2. exemplary teaching performance based on measurable, fair evaluations;**
- 3. experience, training and certificate appropriate for the indicated responsibilities;**
- 4. selections of said teachers shall be made by recommendation of a committee of certificated and appointed classroom personnel of which classroom teachers will comprise the majority. The principal shall have final approval of any selection. The committee shall be selected annually by a secret ballot of the classroom teachers.**

**The BOARD agrees to designate at least one teaching position at every local school site under the description provided in this Article.**

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*what the CTU put on the table*

**36-6. A joint BOARD/UNION committee shall be established in accordance with the provisions of Article 45-1 of this Agreement to study, discuss, and submit recommendations to the General Superintendent of Schools concerning the purpose, scope, eligibility requirements, and duties for teachers selected to participate in a voluntary career opportunity program. Among the areas to be considered are said teachers' involvement at the local school level in inservice training programs, staff development, and curriculum and instruction improvements.**

**Membership on this committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.**

**(NOTE: To be placed under article 45.)**

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*what they got*

# Executive Summary

Restructuring and Revitalizing The Chicago Public Schools In 1988 contains recommendations from the Chicago Teachers Union for educational reform and school-based management. The 17 major recommendations in this document (starting on page 11) address the need to:

- A. Develop a school-based management program and implement it on a voluntary basis as a pilot project in each of Chicago 23 elementary school districts. (Recommendations 1-3)
  
- B. Improve professional standards in order to attract, train, compensate, and retain the highest qualified teachers and career service professionals to work in our city's public school classrooms. (Recommendations 4-9)
  
- C. Reduce class size (students per class) to improve the quality of instruction for each student, and develop a program to relieve overcrowding in schools. (Recommendations 10-13)
  
- D. Improve staff development to enhance teaching skills. (Recommendations 14-15)
  
- E. Eliminate unnecessary and burdensome paperwork which steals valuable time from the highest goal of the school system -- educating children. (Recommendations 16-17)

The recommendations provide a clear path to improve the delivery of education in the Chicago Public Schools, to regain the public's confidence in the system's ability to provide quality education, and lay a foundation to justify the increased, stable, long-term funding from the state which the schools sorely need.

## INTRODUCTION

In 1985, Chicago Teachers Union issued its first report on educational reform, entitled "Perspective From The Classroom." At that time the debate in school reform focused on legislative initiatives and the need to mandate change in the Chicago Public Schools through law. Since that time much has happened and some reforms have been initiated.

The debate now focuses on two broad areas of reform: shared decisionmaking and increased parent involvement. The school system needs a conscientious and thoughtful move toward restructuring the decision-making authority, greater parental involvement, more professionalization of the teaching process, and restructuring the teaching-learning environment.

Simultaneously, action must be taken to secure long-term, stable funding for Chicago's public schools.

Chicago Teachers Union is actively working with the Chicago Board of Education, public officials, parent and civic groups, and the business community to accomplish these goals. We invite you to give careful consideration to our recommendations and engage in the public dialogue on how to make Chicago's public schools the best in the nation. Together, we can begin to accomplish this in 1988. Our goal should be no less.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline B. Vaughn

President

STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRESS ON EDUCATIONAL REFORM

## STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRESS ON EDUCATIONAL REFORM

The CTU's original Perspective From The Classroom report contained 47 specific recommendations for educational reform aimed at legislative action. Some of these reforms were adopted by the legislature in 1985 with the participation of other concerned organizations and legislators. Among these were acceptance of the concept of education reform as a viable means of improving student achievement, upgrading standards for both students, teachers, and administrators through:

- A single state teacher certification authority.
- Upgrading standards for teacher certification including written examinations.
- A clear and fair process for evaluating and dismissing incompetent teachers which includes peer assistance and consultation
- A state mandate requiring local school districts to have students tested regularly for academic proficiency throughout their school life.
- A state report card requiring each local school district to publicly report on student testing results and for the state to publish them to inform the public on the status of student learning in Illinois.
- Broader state support for full-day kindergarten programs
- Giving elementary students experience in a departmentalized instruction program.
- Extending state authority to grant certification to school principals with a mandated periodic renewal.
- A comprehensive program to train administrators in evaluating personnel.



CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION INITIATIVES

# CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION INITIATIVES

The Chicago Teachers Union recognizes that legislative mandates are not enough. We agree with local critics of the school system that many educational issues need to be and can be addressed within our own school system. As early as December, 1984 we negotiated with the Chicago Board of Education the formation of joint CTU/school board committees which would address four broad areas of reform:

- Teacher Performance, Evaluation, and Effectiveness
- Teacher Certification, Preparation, and Recruitment
- School Administrator Training and Certification
- Student Expectations and Curriculum

We also continued our efforts in our negotiations with the school board on the 1987-89 employee contract. Although there has been some willingness on the part of board staff to discuss major reform issues, we are disappointed with the slow pace with which the Chicago Board of Education has moved toward embracing local reform initiatives. We join with parents and the business community in urging the board to move forward with planning and preparation.

## SOME ACCOMPLISHMENTS POINT THE WAY

Chicago Teachers Union and the school board have negotiated some key areas of reform. We wish to call particular attention to the following:

- The establishment of a city-wide policy for the evaluation of regularly appointed teachers utilizing a set of standard pedagogical performance objectives; principals are mandated to conduct annual reviews.
- An agreement to develop a pilot teacher internship program in three high schools.

- An agreement to establish a peer assistance pilot program in one elementary district that will pertain to all first-year, regularly appointed teachers.
- An agreement to increase the amount of money allocated to discretionary funds at overcrowded schools.
- An agreement that discussions between the principal, the school faculty's professional problems committee, and the approval of the local school improvement council will determine how discretionary funds are spent.
- A joint Union/Board committee to discuss and formulate a voluntary career ladder program at the school level for classroom teachers who wish to accept additional responsibilities for the educational process at the local school.
- A joint Union/Board committee to discuss and develop a model for school based management, using the present local school improvement council guidelines as a starting point.
- A new procedure for the remediation, and, if necessary, dismissal of tenured teachers identified as performing unsatisfactorily by the school administrator. The procedures include peer assistance and consultation, regular administrative observation, and consultation.

We must stress that the agreements and progress noted here are but a first step toward moving the Chicago schools along a sure and clear path of educational reform. These efforts are only the beginning of changes which must occur in order to prepare Chicago's students to be qualified, competent, competitive adults, and able to succeed in the 21st century.

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON  
DECENTRALIZATION AND SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

## RECOMMENDATIONS ON DECENTRALIZATION AND SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

There is clear consensus among parents, teachers, and leaders in business and government that two important issues must be addressed by those concerned with the quality of education in this city.

First, the present administrative bureaucracy of Chicago's public school system must be restructured and redefined, and changed and made more effective. There are calls for the dismantling of the bureaucracy and the dispersal of decision- and policy making authority from the central school board. Some seek to divide authority into 20 or more local districts. Others seek to divide this authority among all 600 local school councils.

The Chicago Teachers Union rejects any legislative or local initiative for decentralizing the Chicago Public Schools, but we do recognize that such proposals are an outgrowth of increasing parent and citizen frustration with the lack of progress in our schools. We share their concerns.

The second area of agreement is that there is too little parental involvement in helping the local school succeed in its mission. CTU believes that the solution to these problems can be found in the development of a program for shared decision-making at the local school called school-based management. Such a program provides for the participation of the local school council in the setting of local policy, hiring of a principal and control over a budget. It provides for management of the day to day operations by teachers and the principal. The basic components of the school community would then be involved and have a stake in a successful educational program: locally initiated and locally developed.

While school-based management is a relatively new and untried process in a large urban setting, CTU will share research findings from programs currently underway in urban settings with similar demographics as Chicago's system, such as Dade County, Florida and Hammond, Indiana.

We recommend that a pilot program be voluntarily established in each of Chicago's 23 school districts as soon as possible. CTU has urged the board of education to activate the Union/Board joint committee negotiated to develop a model and recommendations for operation of a school-based management program. An effective model for school-based management should include as much of the existing school governance and teacher contract structure as possible.

We also encourage board members, parents, and business leaders to make on-site visits to these programs to assess their effectiveness. An effective school-based management program should include:

- 1. An oversight committee comprised of board members, teachers and community representatives from selected schools with authority to oversee implementation.
- 2. Local School Improvement Councils with expanded budgetary and administrative selection authority, as mandated.
- 3. A school management team to guide implementation of instructional programs and run the school on a daily basis.

Chicago Teachers Union believes that open discussion will provide valuable insight into the development of a policy for restructuring schools, and re-emphasize the need for responsible planning. Chicago must function as a total entity, and it cannot be governed by individuals or groups concerned only with their own interests. The school system in this city must be restructured and revitalized to meet the demands on the future leaders of our city, our students.

Parents and educators alike must recognize that restructuring the system is only one issue facing public education in this city. In order to change the public's perception of the public school system and to insure that quality educational opportunities are provided for students, Chicago's parents, teachers, students, civic, business, and community leaders must join this effort to reform the education process.

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON  
IMPROVED PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND EDUCATION

## IMPROVED PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND EDUCATION

Chicago Teachers Union will work toward changing the way teachers in this school system are involved in the educational process at the local level. We seek changes that will radically alter the industrial factory process upon which our schools have been modeled. There are several important problems that deserve immediate attention.

Our teaching force is growing older. We estimate that more than 1/3 and perhaps as many as 1/2 of our teachers will retire in the next five years. Simultaneously the system presently has the largest number of temporarily assigned teachers since the 1960's. Over 4,000 teachers are full-time substitutes, and during the past six months this number has been steadily growing.

We therefore recommend that steps be taken to recruit new teachers to the profession, to retrain career employees and to develop an incentive program to retain qualified, enthusiastic teacher specialists. These steps should include:

- 4. Establishment of a full internship program after a model has been successfully tried, mutually developed and cooperatively served by area universities to assure a steady flow of good candidates as beginning teachers.
- 5. Establishment of a systemwide peer assistance program for probationary first year teachers.
- 6. Development of a voluntary teacher/peer intervention program for tenured teachers.



Our school system will not be able to attract and retain career teachers without good salaries - competitive with comparable professions and with accompanying career incentives - and without sound aggressive recruiting plans. To accomplish this we recommend:

- 7. A recruiting program that will track scholastically successful Chicago high school graduates through their college careers, offering incentives to bring them back to our schools as teachers.
- 8. Higher starting salaries tied to rigid internship and performance standards.
- 9. Career status and salary incentives for classroom teachers that do not depend on subordinating classroom teaching for administrative roles.

One of the pre-eminent standards by which schools, both public and private, are judged is the number of students placed in each classroom. Chicago's schools have among the highest ratio of students to teachers in this state and this condition must be addressed.

CTU will continue to seek relief through the following:

- 10. Class size reductions through contractual negotiations giving special emphasis to reduced teacher-pupil ratios in elementary schools, and low achieving schools.
- 11. An increase in the number of teachers who provide direct services to children at the school site.
- 12. The development of programs - supported by the Union, Board, and parents - which will more effectively utilize available classroom space throughout the city.
- 13. An aggressive program of construction, rehabilitation, and/or rental of classroom units for overcrowded schools without space.

Improving the overall instructional process and quality of instruction is of prime importance. In addition to developing programs and salary schedules which will attract good teachers we must devise ways to provide professional growth and to utilize educational research to improve classroom instruction. Adequate time must be provided to teachers for preparation. Unnecessary paperwork, which detracts from instructional efforts, must be eliminated.

We therefore recommend:

- 14. The development of a system wide staff development program guided by and planned in consultation with teachers to provide direct, on-site experience and utilization of updated techniques.
- 15. The initiation of teacher-trainer techniques developed through the American Federation of Teachers Educational Research and Dissemination program in each of our 23 elementary and high school districts.
- 16. The elimination of unnecessary, duplicative or frivolous paperwork which takes valuable time away from classroom instruction.
- 17. The review and approval of administratively-initiated recordkeeping above the school level by a joint committee of teachers and local administrators.

## CONCLUSION

The Chicago Teachers Union's vision of the future of the teaching profession is one that depicts a system that attracts new, enthusiastic, highly-trained college graduates. They will work with career teachers and paraprofessionals who are actively involved with day-to-day decisions relative to work with students. All teachers will be treated and paid as professionals. And, as professionals, they will perform and accept responsibility as professionals.

We envision a system with educational workers who care about the system and a system that has the active involvement of parents of students, concerned civic, business, and community leaders.

The Chicago Teachers Union's recommendations will help achieve such a system, one where the participants noted above can support our efforts to upgrade standards for students, improve conditions for school employees, and who are willing to find a permanent source of revenue to support a restructured, revitalized system of public education in Chicago.

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