

PROPOSED POLICY STATEMENT ON SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING
November 1, 1988 (First Reading)
November 8, 1988 (No Revisions)

The policy of the Board of Education is to support school restructuring as a process to achieve a fundamental change in school organization and instruction that will prepare all students for the future. The purposes of school restructuring are to improve the quality of instruction and student achievement. School restructuring will require greater site autonomy and control over budgets, shared decision making among staff members, parents and students, and appropriate accountability standards for student outcomes.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

The Board of Education establishes the following set of belief statements that are the rationale for promoting school restructuring:

Beliefs About Change

- ° We believe that school restructuring is not a passing fad but is a long-term strategic planning effort to improve the quality of student instruction by changing the organization of schools.
- ° We believe that the environment for change must allow for flexibility and risk taking.

Beliefs About Students

- ° We believe all students can learn and that public education should enable all students to fulfill their unique potential.
- ° We believe all students deserve to be at school, that each child should feel welcomed by the school staff, and that each student should achieve success at school.
- ° We believe that students learn in different ways, and that current instructional methods must change to meet each student's learning needs.
- ° We believe that with the rapid increase in knowledge, students must learn to effectively process information and become lifelong learners.
- ° We believe that parental involvement is an essential element of effective student learning.

Beliefs About Schools

- ° We believe that the school is the locus of change.
- ° We believe that schools should have greater autonomy and foster shared decision making among administrators, teachers, classified staff, and parents.
- ° We believe that greater school autonomy and shared decision making must be accompanied by the acceptance of responsibility and accountability for student learning.

Beliefs About Schools (Continued)

- We believe that changes in school organization, instructional practices, and staff roles will occur in phases and that they will need time to evolve. It will take several years before major change is evident.
- We believe that schools can restructure within their resource allocations.

Belief About District Organization

- We believe that the district organization exists to set district goals and objectives, provide support and help for schools, establish district standards, and assist schools in assessing results.

Beliefs About Changing Roles

- We believe that desired change in school must have significant involvement from teachers and place primary emphasis on teaching and the instructional process.
- We believe that principals should lead all employees in schools to create an environment for change by encouraging collaboration, shared decision making, and team work involving parents, students and the community.
- We believe that granting schools greater autonomy and encouraging shared decision making, collaboration, and team work will change the roles not only of school staffs, parents, and students but also of board members, employee organization leaders, cabinet members, and district certificated and classified support staff. Relationships must become more enabling, supportive, and empowering.

Belief About San Diego City Schools

- We believe San Diego City Schools is in a unique position to be a model for school restructuring nationally given the composition of students, quality of staff, and district reputation for innovation.

REQUIREMENTS

The Board of Education encourages schools to explore new and more effective ways to educate students and to request changes or waivers of present requirements that unnecessarily restrict schools. Until such changes are made or waivers granted, schools will need to adhere to the following requirements:

- Work to achieve district goals
- Adhere to board policy
- Conduct activities that are legal and ethical

REQUIREMENTS (Continued)

- ° Adhere to collective bargaining agreements
- ° Operate within resource allocations
- ° Avoid activities that negatively impact other schools

CHANGE OR WAIVER PROCESS

The Innovation and Change Leadership Group will assist schools with requests to waive local, state, and federal policy, laws, regulations, and collective bargaining agreements to facilitate school restructuring efforts. The Innovation and Change Leadership Group will recommend for approval waivers or adjustments to policies or agreements to the Board of Education or the appropriate employee organization.

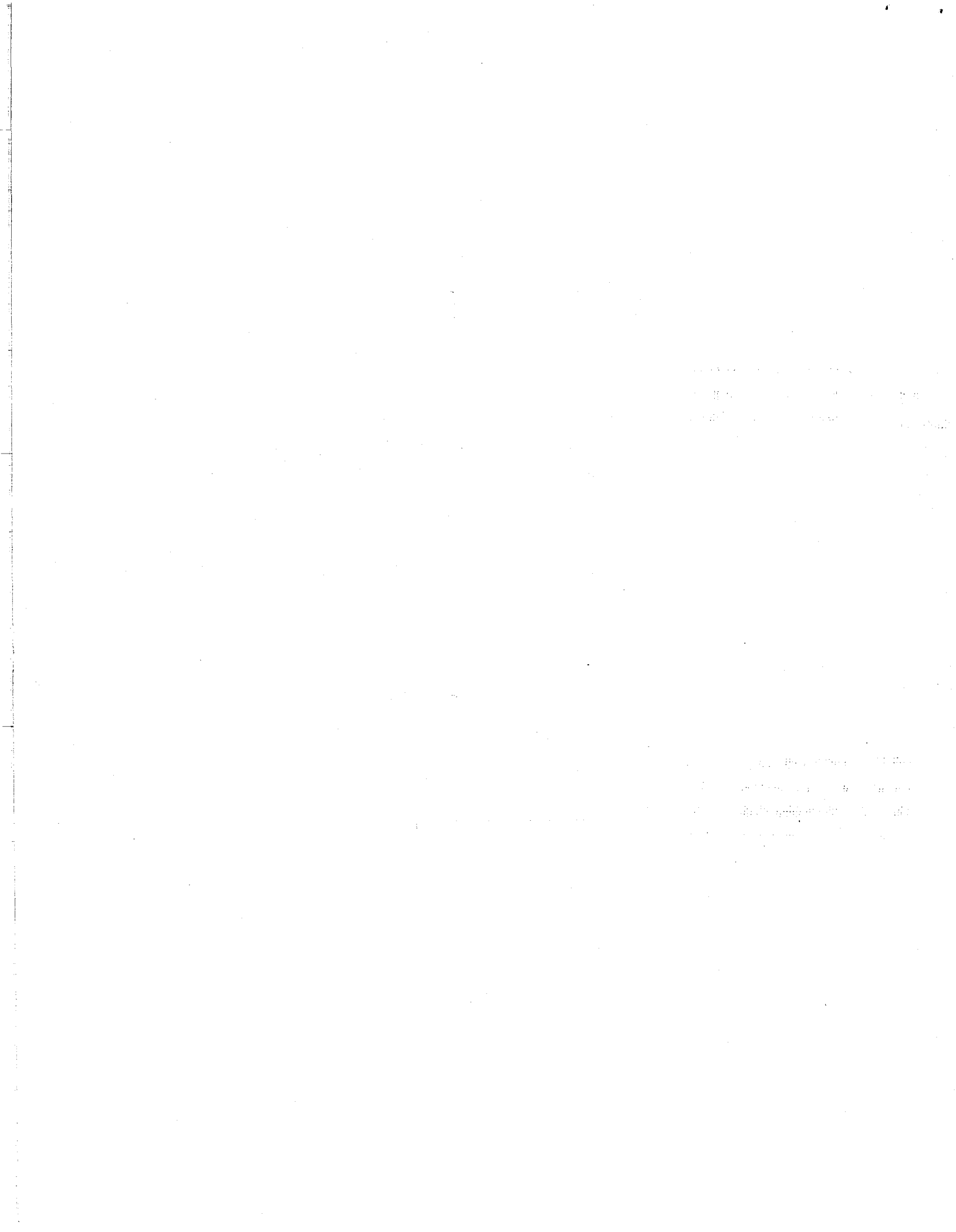
PROCESS AND PLANNING

The Board of Education establishes the following as important for each restructuring school to observe:

- ° Commit to the purpose and belief statements of the Board of Education's restructuring policy.
- ° Engage in broad-based shared decision making involving the school administration, faculty, staff, parents, and students as appropriate.
- ° Engage in a planning process to create a vision statement, define school needs, establish goals and priorities, design implementation plans, and develop measures of success and an ongoing assessment process.
- ° Establish goals and implementation plans for improved student learning which are as good or better than what currently exists.
- ° Apply for a change or waiver as necessary.
- ° Seek additional outside funds and in-kind contributions to support restructuring if needed.

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SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Office of the Deputy Superintendent

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON
PROPOSED POLICY STATEMENT ON SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING
August 31, 1988

Issue/Concern

The superintendent and Board of Education are encouraging schools to engage in a school restructuring process. This process eventually will affect the roles and responsibilities of the entire school district community. The board establishes this policy to reflect the common agreements in the district about the definition/purpose, beliefs, and parameters of school restructuring.

Background

On June 9, 1987, the Schools of the Future Commission presented its report, Which Way to the Future? San Diego and its Schools at a Crossroads, to the school district community at a regular Board of Education meeting. This blue ribbon citizens commission called for a "fundamental restructuring of schools to experiment with new approaches and organization that help all students attain productive futures."

The Board of Education approved the "Initial staff response to the 'Schools of the Future' Commission report recommendations" on July 28, 1987. The superintendent and board accepted the commission's findings and outlined initial follow up steps to the panel's major recommendations. One step charged the superintendent with establishing an Innovation and Change Leadership Group "to develop a comprehensive plan for implementing various elements of school reform." The superintendent established this leadership group of twenty-seven members on October 19, 1987, appointing ten teacher and ten administrator representatives, one Board of Education member, two Schools of the Future Commission members, two Parent Teacher Association members, one Dropout Prevention and Recovery Round Table member, and one local university school of education member.

As one of its first activities, the Innovation and Change Leadership Group sponsored a series of seminars on school restructuring with the San Diego County Office of Education, University of San Diego, San Diego State University, and Association of California School Administrators. The four seminars featured the executive director of the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy and principals, teachers, and district officials from three large urban school systems across the country who are at the forefront of the school restructuring movement. Attended by over one hundred school and central office staff, these seminars provided the background information and momentum to launch a major school restructuring initiative.

A number of activities took place during school year 1987-88 to support school restructuring initiatives. The superintendent, his top administrative staff, and the Board of Education met for three half-day and one two-day session to study and discuss school restructuring concepts. The Innovation and Change Leadership Group met monthly to design districtwide school restructuring orientation and training workshops. Teams of administrators, teachers, school

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site staff and parents from thirty-eight interested schools met for a full-day workshop on Saturday April 16, 1988, to learn about and consider school restructuring possibilities. Immediately following the end of the traditional school, from June 27-30, similar teams from twenty-five of these schools attended a four-day seminar to receive training in a strategic planning process to be used with their school communities in considering restructuring proposals. In addition to school activities, central office divisions have conducted workshops with their staffs to consider how their roles will change and how they can best support schools engaged in the restructuring process.

As a result of the seminars, workshops, retreats and other activities conducted during the 1987-88 school year, consensus on a definition/purpose statement, a set of belief statements, and a short list of parameters has emerged that form a policy statement on school restructuring.

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SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Office of the Deputy Superintendent

THE RESTRUCTURING PROCESS
August 31, 1988

The basic purpose of restructuring is to empower schools to develop successful life long learners and to make schools better. The school becomes the fundamental decision making unit but operates within a framework which assures school equity and accountability. Schools maintain a responsibility for carrying out the district mission, policy, and goals but have flexibility in determining how they can be achieved. Restructuring schools follow a strategic planning process.

1. Improving the Knowledge Base

Making teachers, principals and other staff knowledgeable is an obvious first step in enhancing their power. The more knowledgeable all staff are the more able they will be to escape their isolation and gain a more global view. Principals, teachers and parents should read pertinent research literature, participate in discussion groups, listen to speakers in the field, participate in workshops and seminars which will provide basic knowledge and training about restructuring concepts. Informal and formal arrangements are encouraged. This kind of preparation seems necessary to engage in planning a particular restructuring proposal and in creating a climate for change. Learn all you can! Working in a collegial fashion may represent a new approach for some groups. Time spent in training, developing skills for consensus building, goal setting, and group dynamics is generally well spent.

2. Developing a Vision and Goals

During this phase, the school staff supported by School Operations Division will want to meet, discuss, and develop consensus around their vision for what skills, knowledge, and attitudes the future student of their school will need to master. Then, given the economic, social, demographic and technological changes that characterize this era, they must agree on a vision of what their school must be like to meet these needs. This involves collection of data on the academic, social, health, and economic needs of the students.

Creating a vision may require several meetings and the involvement of various resource persons and materials. School Operations Division will assist in coordinating these resources, including support such as that provided by the Matsushita Foundation. Once a vision is established and a notion of the goals that will move the school toward achieving it, the group will want to agree on what to do first and what will be the measurable indicator(s) of success. Specific student outcomes are needed to assess progress and direction of the group's work. For good communication and easy reference, it makes sense to commit the vision statement(s) and goals to writing. They will become the framework for the school's work over the next several years. By this point in the planning process, it is a good idea to do an informal assessment of the staff commitment to this idea. Support of at least a two-thirds majority of the staff and strong commitment from parents ensure ownership of the vision and planning process.

3. Developing and Implementing Strategies

Using the data that has been collected about their students and school, and the vision of where they want to go, the group will want to gather as much information as possible about program ideas, including what others have tried, the context of their implementation, and what success was realized. Initial thinking about changes may include ideas such as changing approaches to instruction and curriculum, changing the school organization, restructuring staff roles, and new approaches to decision making. Change should not be thought about for change sake but as a necessary modification to meet certain goals. School Operations Division would be able to form an inter-divisional ad hoc support council to discuss and probe the initial proposals of the school group, assist in assessing impact on divisions, resolve issues, and identify waiver needs. The full exploration of the various options should help the group to select strategies which are both feasible and more specifically focused on the goals the group has in mind. Development of a detailed plan may be best accomplished through subcommittees working on different components. As strategies are selected, the group should agree up front on what they will regard as successful accomplishment. These benchmarks will provide continuous feedback on progress.

All plans should be forwarded to the Innovation and Change Leadership Group for information and coordination. Where exceptions to policy, regulations, or contract provisions are desired, the school would request the Innovation and Change Leadership Group to review and recommend changes to the Board of Education and/or appropriate employee groups.

4. Launching the Plan

Good restructuring plans are never final but are in a constant state of refinement to be responsive to changing student, staff, and community needs. At some point the group reaches a critical mass with regard to the vision, some feasible goals, and a priority set of program ideas to work on. It is important to test that consensus by securing the commitment of two-thirds of the staff and support from parents. This should culminate in the formal establishment of the school governance council representative of staff and parents.

Having satisfied itself with a reasonable background of knowledge, a manageable task, collective will, and a self correcting capacity, the group should begin implementation. School Operations Division and the interdivisional team can help the group in assessing its readiness for moving ahead or considering additional restructuring.

5. Evaluating and Reviewing the Plan

As the staff implements the plan, it will gain insight and experience for making revisions. It is important to make this review a structured part of the process. A good plan is kept dynamic and helps participants feel they are important to shaping it along the way.