

Reviews

Review Coordinators: Charles W. Beegle, Associate Professor of Education, University of Virginia, Charlottesville; James B. Boyer, Professor and Institute Director, Urban Education Institute, Kansas State University, Manhattan; Wilma S. Longstreet, Professor of Education, University of Michigan, Flint; and Edna Mitchell, Head, Department of Teacher Education, Mills College, Oakland, California.

The Dynamics of Educational Change: Toward Responsive Schools. John I. Goodlad. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975. 267 pp. —Reviewed by Harold G. Shane, University Professor of Education, Indiana University, Bloomington.

When we first became acquainted in the early 1950's while serving on the then brand new ASCD Publications Committee, I learned both to admire and to respect John I. Goodlad. The past 25 years have increased my high regard for his personal and professional qualities. His recent report, *The Dynamics of Educational Change*, is an excellent example of Dr. Goodlad's prescient and sustained efforts to suggest and encourage long overdue reforms in U.S. schooling.

Dynamics is not a keystone in Goodlad's list of publications because a "keystone" presumably caps or ends a task. Rather the book is a milestone along a road that can carry curriculum and instruction personnel toward attainment of the "responsive model of educational improvement in school settings," which the author develops in Chapter 7. But first let me sketch the broad design of this insightful, study-based volume.

Goodlad begins with a highly readable essay on the paradoxes, the problems, and the procrastination that are related to stability and change in U.S. education. He also confronts the reader with a seemingly irreconcilable dilemma—namely, that "change arising from without usually is foreign to the system for which it is intended and is rejected like an unsuitable transplanted kidney" (p. 19). At the same time there is a need to recon-



cile outside resources and inside needs so that they can be brought together in productive harmony. Goodlad goes on in a specific, practical, and documented fashion to suggest how the dilemma's horns can be blunted by the reform and reconstruction effected by the persons who live and work each day in the *individual* school.

Chapter 2, which treats the "schooling decade"—from Sputnik (1957) to the initial impact of the ESEA (1967)—does an excellent job of depicting and assessing the reforms on which many educators of the era had pinned their hopes. Because of his involvement in the decade, the author also lends it a quality of personal history that brings veracity and high interest to the pages. Goodlad in Chapter 3 contrasts two modes of thought

regarding the improvement of schooling (empirical-inductive and theoretical-deductive) each of which he deems inadequate unless they are deftly interwoven. At this juncture the reader moves with the author to the heart of the book—the development of Goodlad's hypothesis (first stated 22 years ago) that "... the single school, with its principal, teachers, pupils, parents, and community links, is the key unit in educational change..." (p. 62).

The confines of an 800-word ceiling preclude the detailed review that chapters 4-8 merit as Goodlad reviews the increasing progress and accelerating tempo of the work of the League of Cooperating Schools. This is an 18-school consortium, a cluster with which he has worked for the past decade in an effort to create a "responsive model" of desirable educational changes. I would identify as a few of the high spots: (a) ten conceptualizations (pp. 86-87) that guided the League; (b) the DDAE process (dialogue, decision making action, and evaluation) described in Chapter 5 (pp. 175-184); and (c) in Chapter 7, the eight postulates germane to school improvement and the related, practical observations that, when taken together, constitute classic advice distilled from many years of hard and sometimes frustrating work.

The concluding chapter, "Notes on the Ecology of Educa-

tion," was one to which I particularly responded—in part because, like Goodlad, I have long felt that the school is an integral part of an "ecological community"; a system in which humans—and their schools—are a part of, not masters and exploiters of, the environment. In this context, Goodlad's closing paragraph captures something of the spirit and the context of this work:

"Each of us owns an interest in every school. And so there must always be both an inner and an outer force in changing schools. The problem is to maintain a productive state of tension between the two. The League of Cooperating Schools represents a modest contribution to the understanding of what is required. It promises no easy, instant, rose gardens; only the planting and caring thereof, accompanied by many hours of satisfaction in watching the bushes grow and bloom."

A parting comment: *The Dynamics of Educational Change* is carefully footnoted, has a comprehensive, annotated 23-page bibliography, useful documentation provided in three appendices, and a suitable index.

The Dynamics of Educational Change: Toward Responsive Schools. John I. Goodlad. Dayton, Ohio: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975. 267 pp. —Reviewed by Jerry L. Patterson, Curriculum Coordinator, Madison Metropolitan School District.

In this volume, Goodlad traces the creation and implementation of the Study of Educational Change and School Improvement (SECSI), a league of 18 cooperating schools linked to an infrastructure headed by Goodlad and colleagues. Unlike other volumes in the *I/D/E/A/* series, this book places the SECSI project within the context of a more general analysis of educational change.

Wading through the experiences of the League of Cooperating

Schools, the reader finds Goodlad's major premise:

... schools, under certain conditions, can become much more vital than they currently are. This book is concerned, then, with the process, the dynamics of educational change and improvement, not with the descriptions of what reconstructed schools should look like.

A responsive model of change, according to the author, is predicated on the following postulates, among others.

- *The optimal unit for educational change is the single school.* Goodlad contends that this organizational unit "... falls nicely between the depersonalized, complex, amorphous school system and the somewhat intimidated, impotent, individual teacher." Of particular importance in focusing on the school is the culture of that school. As the author points out, "a school can't be adequately understood in terms of its isolated components and their separate operation, but only as an interrelated whole." One point Goodlad slights is the fact that as school size increases no single culture dominates. As evident in many secondary schools, subcultures within the organization become the primary units of change.

- *An infrastructure, or resource base, needs to provide continuing support to the unit experiencing change.* Given Goodlad's belief that change occurs when a productive tension exists between

an organism wanting a better condition for itself and an organism whose self-interests are served by assisting in the process, it becomes necessary to establish a support base outside the culture of the school. While I agree with the postulate, I do take issue with Goodlad's contention that this role should be filled by an agency independent of the school district. I think he overgeneralizes when he claims that the natural drive of the central office is maintaining the status quo, not tension.

- *If change within a school is going to be significant, the school will require a supportive peer reference group.* Goodlad concludes that only in rare instances, if ever, will individual schools remain self-renewing unless they have access to positive peer feedback, possibly in a consortium arrangement with other schools. He tempers his position with a caveat: "A school that changes beyond a little tinkering will attract attention. And since the school is in many ways an isolated, fragile culture, even a little negative feedback may put an end to all innovative stirrings."

I have just scratched the surface of Goodlad's contribution in *The Dynamics of Educational Change*. I am confident the reader will be able to sift through recounts of the League's experiences to find one of the most provocative treatments on a theory of change. The next step is to build from this foundation a comparable contribution for educational practice. [E]

Reviewers



Harold G. Shane



Jerry L. Patterson

Copyright © 1977 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.