CHAPTER VI

ORGANIZING STAFF TO RELEASE

THE POTENTIALITIES OF THE CHILD

Managing an educational program designed to release human potential
at optimum rates requires a highly skilled and experienced staff.
Considering the complex dimensions of the teaching responsibility in
an Anisa system, it is not difficult to recognize the need for
extensive preparation of staff and the advisability of their special-
ization around various aspects of a total support system for developing
learning competence in youngsters. We have adopted a differentiated
staffing arrangement in which a master teacher, who understands both
curriculum content and the processes underlying the attainment of
learning competence, holds a central position in the management of
teaching and learning. This role is supported by the following staff
positions: assistant teachers and aides; a diagnostician and evaluation
specialists; curriculum and programming specialists; communication
and media technologists; multi-arts specialists who are competent in
all the arts and know how to draw upon them to bring life and vitality
into every learning experience; a family-community-school liaison worker
whose job it is to reduce cultural discontinuities between family,
home, and school; learning disabilities specialists; health and medical
specialists; and, program administrators and their staff, whose function
it is to keep the educational system serving the purpose of releasing
the potentialities of the children with efficiency.

Differentiation of Staff

According to Allen and Morrison, differentiated staffing repre-
sents a structural response to a need for the individualization of
instruction by individualizing staff assignment according to the needs
of the child, the preparation or competency of the staff, and the tasks
to be performed.[1] Arranging the staff in this way makes the teaching
responsibility manageable by decreasing the complexity of the teaching
role thereby freeing the teacher from having to be a jack-of-all trades.
This staffing arrangement serves to redress an old myth passed down
through the years that teachers are like interchangeable parts--all
are comparable and equally capable of doing everything.[2] It also
redresses the existing condition that makes growing older and accumulating
credits the only way a teacher can gain promotion on the job. By not
rewarding teaching competence this condition discourages professional
growth. Allen and Morrison indicate a number of other benefits that
derive from a differentiated staffing arrangement:

1. Automatic promotion policies that move teachers
    on regardless of competency can be eliminated.

2. Identification or definition of specific respon-
    sibilities can determine the selection of personnel
    and their training. (An example of this would be
    a differentiation between those who are good at
    developing materials with those who are good at
    presenting materials.

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[1]Allen, Dwight W. & Morrison, Gary. Differentiated staffing and the
nonprofessional: a need for educational personnel development, unpublished
manuscript.

[2]Ibid.

3. Higher salaries can be more equitably distributed
   by taking into consideration level of responsibility
   and degree of excellence in handling it. It is
   obvious that the master teacher should receive
   a higher salary because of his greater responsibility
   and because he is expected to have a higher level
   of competency than the assistant teacher or the
   aide.

4. It guarantees a future in the classroom for good
   teachers. In the absence of a differentiated
   staffing arrangement, good teachers are inclined
   to be promoted out of the classroom into admin-
   istration in order to receive higher salaries
   and achieve higher status, thereby sharpening
   the dichotomy between teacher-professional and
   the administrator-professional.

The flexibility that differentiated staffing provides is another

benefit. Where an existing staff is comprised of individuals with

certain incompetencies, their responsibilities or roles may be organized

in a way which highlights their strengths rather than their inadequacies.

In the case of the Anisa system, differentiated staffing achieves

the goal of developing learning competence in its students by making

certain that every teaching responsibility necessary for accomplishing

that goal is assigned to a teacher or specialist thereby forming a

comprehensive support system for the child. This staffing arrangement

includes utilizing students to teach other students. To do this

effectively, all adult staff, but the master teacher in particular,

has the responsibility of training the "teacher-students" how to

teach. In this way their own learning is consolidated.

Differentiating the staff, then, is not a response to create new hierarchies just to take care of problems created by increase in size as happened in the growth of traditional education from a one-room schoolhouse manned by a single teacher to the existing educational settings with their proliferation of administrators and supervisors who take the higher status and authority positions, leaving the teacher at the bottom rung. Following are brief explanations of tasks, differentiated into staff roles, essential to the maintenance of the Anisa educational system, and indications of the kinds of knowledge and skills indispensable to each.

Master Teacher (Teacher Generalist) and Assistants

We envisage a new kind of master teacher[1] or generalist-teacher who possesses a myriad of competencies which make him effective in working with children and supporting staff. He holds a central position in the educational staff and all other roles are basically supportive of that position. Through a collaborative effort with other staff members, he arranges environments and guides interaction with them. He assumes major responsibility for the instructional activities in specific curriculum areas of the model. Deciding the mode of instruction and selecting appropriate media, supervising teachers and aides,

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[1]Some writers feel that the title "Master Teacher" is unfortunate; perhaps a more suitable name can be found. So long as the role is clear and flexibly conceived, the name will probably not matter (see English, 1972, p. 31).

orchestrating the assistance of support staff as needed, and to some extent participating in home-community-school activities which are arranged to maintain experiential continuity for the child--all of these are responsibilities of his position. In addition, he would be expected to contribute to the evaluation of student and teacher performance, to the determination of overall program effectiveness, and to the in-service training of aides and students doing their practica as teacher interns. The assistant teacher may be required to perform any number of the above roles depending on the ways the talents and skills of the master teacher and the assistant complement each other. An assistant teacher may be a prospective master teacher in training under the direct supervision and instruction of the master teacher. We therefore see his responsibilities and competencies differing from that of the master teacher only in degree rather than substance. Other qualifications of this staff member are shared with the curriculum and programming specialist, whose role is discussed later.

Diagnostician and Evaluation Specialist

Diagnosing and evaluating individual progress as well as the total effectiveness of the program is crucial to its operations. Therefore, the staffing pattern must include a diagnostic and evaluation specialist who operates a clinic which provides student assessment information for the master teacher and the curriculum specialist. He keeps records of various kinds on each student; participates in program planning with other staff members; collaborates with the learning disorders

specialists in assessing student problems, and directs the planning and

implementation of the evaluation. His particular skills are also helpful

in supervising student interns and assisting parents to gain an under-

standing of their youngster's progress. In a general sense, this sounds

very much like a diagnostician and evaluation specialist's job description

one would find in traditional schools. However, in an Anisa system

we would expect this member of the staff to have, in addition to the

customary skills, a very comprehensive and fundamental understanding

of the nature of learning competence, culture and its relationship to

perception and learning,[1] the nature of cognition, the transfer of

learning, memory, and the nature of volition and perseverance. He

must be a trained observer and a specialist in the techniques of

analyzing child behavior, one who understands tests and measurements

and their limitations, one who knows techniques for self-evaluation

and has a mature capability of analyzing and interpreting data within

the theoretical framework of the Anisa Model. Ideally, this person

would tend to assume that the fundamental cause of a child's lack of

progress is likely not to be one of limitation, but rather one of not

having found the means for the development of particular competencies.

Thus, he would not focus on the student's perceived limitations by

attempting to circumscribe potential on the basis of an intelligence

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[1]This is of critical importance if the system is to be free from in-
stitutionalized racism and preclude the transmission of prejudice and
discrimination to the oncoming generation (see Chapter VIII for fuller
discussion).

test score or the results of an achievement test battery; instead,
he would use the performance data as a basis for generating hypotheses
about what should be done to remove obstacles and facilitate release
of the child's potentialities.

Curriculum and Programming Specialists

The fundamental responsibility of curriculum and programming
specialists is to fuse content (broadly organized into three basic
categories: (1) math, science, and technology; (2) communications--
language, reading, and writing--and human relations; and, (3) art
and aesthetics with arrangement of environment and modes of guiding
interaction with it for the purpose of developing learning competence
and forming a value system on which the higher-order competencies
are based. These staff members must be experts in working with master
teachers to prepare stimulating and inviting educational environments
as they pertain to the three curriculum areas and should be knowledgeable
in guiding the interaction processes of the child through sequences
of learning experiences which strengthen competence in all areas.
Fundamental to realizing this responsibility is keeping abreast of
new developments in the three basic content areas and introducing
them to other staff members and to children in ways congruent with
their developmental levels.

It is important that they have a basic understanding of how to
provide children with the choices for interaction that develop them
as active learners in charge of their destinies and to consolidate

the formation of attitudes and values that contribute to that same end. Having a fundamental understanding of child development, with particular regard to critical as well as sensitive periods during which the child is most receptive to certain types of experiences, is essential to effective programming. Furthermore, understanding the role played by structure in arranging environment and guiding interaction with them is important. Openness and freedom are not enough in and of themselves, for, as Glenn Nimnicht (1970) has observed, "Freedom without structure is chaos". Curriculum and programming specialists should have a comprehensive understanding of the philosophical basis of the Model, of the nature of learning competence and each of the processes and subprocesses which comprise it, and a knowledge of how to generate learning experiences which require, facilitate, or consolidate those processes. Finally, these staff members should understand something of evaluation and participate in the assessment of student progress and program progress in collaboration with the specialists who are in charge of this responsibility.

Specialist in Psycho-Linguistics and Reading

Although the field of psycho-linguistics is relatively new as a major area of research and theoretical effort in the field of psychology, it is becoming an increasingly important source of assistance to youngsters in acquiring language proficiency. Rosenberg & James (1965) pose many questions yet to be answers: How is language syntax

acquired? What is the role of linguistic science in the psychology of language? How are sentences generated psychologically? What is the role played by pre-established verbal habits in the acquisition and retention of verbal materials? What are the conditions for the modification of behavior? That there are still many questions to be answered should not be discouraging for there already exists a substantial body of information which has unexplored implications for helping youngsters to acquire high levels of linguistic performance. The psycho-linguistics and reading specialist collaborates with the master teacher and curriculum specialists in suffusing the total program with opportunities for language development and reading; works with the diagnostician and learning disorders specialist in creating special approaches for students with particular problems; maintains records on all students related to progress in this area; offers guidance and assistance in supervising student interns; and, lends assistance in program evaluation. In addition to the basic knowledge of the Model and its components, the specialist in psycho-linguistics and reading will have to know the techniques of presenting materials for individual instruction, sequencing them from the concrete to the abstract to facilitate assimilation, to understand the means for developing study skills and study habits, and generally to keep abreast of the fields of psycho-linguistics and reading with particular concern for the practical implications that may surface for helping teachers to be more effective in supporting the process of language acquisition.

Communication and Media Specialist

The primary responsibilities of the communication and media specialist include the following: to assist curriculum specialists and the master teacher in planning the most effective ways of presenting materials to be learned; to create the necessary materials; to work with the learning disabilities specialist to individualize programs and experiences for students facing particular problems; to provide audio-visual and computer-aided instructional services; to supervise the interns and/or aides; and, to participate in program evaluation. The creative demand of this responsibility rests not only in conceptualizing ways of presenting materials visually and auditorally but in developing those materials to fit the special talents of teachers and the particular needs of children.

Multi-Arts Specialist

It is ironic that in a country that now has more than 1,400 symphony orchestras (over half the orchestras in the world) with several thousand professional and amateur chamber music ensembles, over seven hundred and fifty opera groups, more than two hundred band troupes and over forty thousand theatrical enterprises, we have not been very effective in utilizing this wide variety of talents in the arts to educate youngsters. The power of the arts to facilitate the release and structuring of potential has not been exploited by educators, and teachers of art themselves remain unaware of such possibilities, even though the idea is an old one. Plato, for instance,

stated that ". . .rhythm and harmony penetrate very deeply to the inward places of the soul, and affect it most powerfully, imparting grace. . ." (Plato: The Dialogues, Book III, The Republic). Although music floods the corridors and the rooms of most modern schools through the intercom system, its effect is scarcely educative. Rather, its effect is diluted because the steady flow of music sensorily attenuates after a period of time and is therefore no longer consciously registered. It functions more like an anaesthetic rather than as a catalyst for dramatically involving youngsters in learning experiences of vitality and depth.

We cannot expect every master teacher to be capable of fully exploiting the arts. Such exploitation requires one who has devoted much of his academic career to attaining an excellence in the arts that is complemented by a fundamental understanding of their power to facilitate learning how to learn and the formation of values. Participation in art activities affords a significant means of enhancing educational experiences in ways not possible through other approaches. The multi-arts specialist thus serves as an important resource in planning and implementing learning activities centered around an aesthetic mode of inquiry drawing on music, theatre arts, dance, the visual and plastic arts. He coordinates the efforts of master teacher-performers and specialists in other curricular areas and assists in supervising student interns and/or aides with particular focus on how they might gain proficiency in the educational use of

the arts. It has been demonstrated that pantomine, improvision, dance and make-believe activities are not only enjoyable to youngsters, but also provide the means by which information can be communicated in compelling ways that facilitate memory. This is particularly important during the early years when psycho-motor activities are requisite to the efficient assimilation of experience.

We have already discussed art and aesthetics as an indispensable part of the Anisa curriculum--indispensable because they provide one important means of structuring unknowns and creating ideals; they make unknowns approachable with a degree of comfort not attained in other ways. Involvement in the arts can thus help children develop a greater sense of curiosity and draw them into a faith and conviction about their own spiritual realities.

Family-Community-School Liaison Worker

The responsibility of the family-community-school liaison worker is to lessen the deleterious effects of discontinuities that exist among the home, school and community--three important elements that make up the youngster's world--and to help maintain the integrity of a total support system for the child. To achieve this, he must collaborate with other staff members in planning programs relative to home and community involvement; work with the parents and relatives in the preparation of home environments so that they support rather than undermine the educational objectives of the school; follow-up on referral services with various community agencies; facilitate

communication among parents, schools, and the community; and, mobilize
home-school-community resources to help meet student needs. This
staff member is the school's main formal contact with the home and
the community. His role is critical because of the strong influences
the family and the community have on the progress of the youngster
in school. Furthermore, the total staff must understand the experiences
that youngsters have outside the school environment and receive feed-
back from parents and the community if they are to be effective in
individualizing instruction. Such open-two-way communication reduces
misunderstandings that are likely to occur when people view things
from different perspectives. Discontinuities that exist between these
different environments must be bridged and that can be done most
constructively when there is a spirit of cooperation among home, school,
and community representatives.

Learning Disabilities Specialist

The inability of a child to perform a task at the same level of
competency as most others in his age range may be a signal that something
other than a normal difference in developmental rates is the reason;
the child may be laboring with a learning disability of some kind.
The cause can be either a disorder or an impairment of the nervous
system, injury due to disease, accident, sensory deprivation, or
malnutrition. However, most learning disabilities are not a result
of some organic cause but are due to some experiential deficit.

There are various types of learning disabilities for which the
specialist will have to develop prescriptive experiences. Three broad
categories of learning disabilities may be defined:

1. Dyslexia, perhaps the most frequent of all
   types of disabilities--a reading disability
   generally defined by a discrepancy between
   reading and the apparent capacity of the
   individual for reading;

2. Verbal communication disorders--difficulties
   comprehending and/or expressing spoken
   language; and,

3. Visual-motor integration problems--non-
   dyslexic difficulties with spatial orien-
   tation and other problems associated with
   perception, coordination, and body image
   (Frierson and Barbe, 1967).

The learning disabilities specialist must have an understanding of
developmental lags, neurological impairments, genetic variations,
sensory losses, nutritional and chemical imbalances, metabolic
disorders, and the effects of emotional disturbances, in terms of
the child's difficulty in differentiating and/or integrating aspects
of his experience. He would be expected to collaborate with the master
teacher, the diagnostician, and the curriculum specialist in planning
experiences needed to free students from any kind of learning impasse;
to supervise and evaluate these experiences; to work with the family
liaison worker and parents in support of special school programs
established to remove learning problems; and to assist the parents
to understand the difficulty that their youngster is experiencing.
This specialist will have to know the latest research on learning

disabilities and continually expand the scope of his techniques for identifying them and for acquiring new methods for taking preventive action--both medical and educational--in treating learning disabilities.

Of particular concern will be his role in researching and refining ways of detecting a child's failure to differentiate and/or integrate aspects of experience and experimenting with means of facilitating both.

Health and Medical Specialist

The health and medical specialist will assume the responsibility for program planning and implementation related to the maintenance of health. He will be expected to collaborate with the family liaison worker to insure that home conditions are conducive to good health and to help with the referral service. He may be called upon to administer first aid when needed and to provide hygiene information for children, staff and parents. He will be expected to maintain health records on all students and to make recommendations to parents in regard to such matters as innoculations, dental work, and other health needs. A final responsibility of the health and medical specialist is to provide information regarding proper nutrition and diet as a service to parents and to assist in the formulation of menus should the educational program include serving meals.

Children as Staff Assistants

The most flexible aspect of the staff differentiation approach we have adopted lies in the analysis of teaching and administrative

tasks for the purpose of identifying a pervasive network of roles which can be performed by children. Teaching manpower can be multiplied extensively by training older or more experienced children to teach, under the supervision of regular staff, their younger or less experienced peers. Since teaching consolidates learning, there is a double gain from this arrangement. Furthermore, children who grow up in an Anisa educational system become experienced teachers. Thus, the system itself serves as a process for training and selecting teachers for the future. In addition, all "graduates" of the system will have the basic knowledge for being good teachers of their own children when they become parents.

Participation of children in the instructional and administrative functions of the system provide rich opportunities for learning to assume responsibility for assisting others, thereby increasing their moral competence, while at the same time creating a sense of belonging that generates cohesiveness and high morale. Helping the staff also provides children the occasion to express their gratitude through

non-verbal action. As staff members show appreciation for this help,

bonds between staff and children develop. Such bonds are powerful facil-

itators of staff members' efforts to guide the interaction of children

with their environments.

Administrator

The administrator has the responsibility of assisting in the

selection of staff members for the program, collaborating with other

staff members in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the

system. He is generally responsible for administering the program,

keeping the priorities in mind, assessing needs, identifying and

mobilizing resources, differentiating the staff to meet needs of

children and staff alike[1] budgeting and cost effectiveness accounting,

ordering materials, and supervising the facilities. Part of his

function is to participate in home-community-school affairs and to make

certain that the master teacher role has full support from the auxiliary

staff. He has the responsibility of preparing reports on the program

and disseminating information to the staff, students, and the community.

Depending upon the setting, he may at times be called upon to write

proposals and seek funding.

It is the responsibility of the administrator to set the tone of

the educational program. It is not enough to possess organizational

skills; the Anisa school requires an administrator who has a comprehensive

understanding of the philosophical basis of the model and how it translates

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[1]Each of the roles described can be further differentiated as necessary.
For example, the media specialist role might be broken down into software
and hardware specialists. The family-school-community liaison role might
be broken down into three different roles each centering on one of the
three units to be served.

theory into practice. He should have a conceptual grasp of the different areas of learning competence, the specifications which explicate those areas, the objectives they embody and an understanding of how the principles of the model are applied in the creation of learning experiences for children. The role of administrator is not cast in terms of a power position, but rather in terms of service; the administrator should see himself as one who assists in creating and maintaining an environment which releases the potentialities of the child. His and other staff members' approach to discipline must be consistent with the theoretical basis of the model, namely, that aggression, hostility or non-cooperativeness can be traced to a suppression of potential (whether the source be too severe punishment in the past, spoiling or whatever) and that the response to such problems is to identify the suppressants and remove them. Arbitrary authoritarian means of controlling individuals are unacceptable for they do not enable children or staff to experiment with taking charge of their own destinies.

Creating a truly cooperative social environment that mutually supports and contributes to the growth and development of all persons in the total system irrespective of the function and role played is a major goal of an administrator. To achieve it, he must be able to bring together the various resources, human and material, and organize them around a central purpose and its related goals. The coordination of this effort requires human relations skills derived from a noble

vision of man and having a sense of purpose sustained by hope and belief; determining policies which can facilitate a smooth and productive operation in accordance with that purpose; and, communicating verbally and by one's behavior a high level of commitment to the philosophical basis of the model.

Administrative roles are thus seen in aesthetic terms as well as technological and human relations terms. These roles and the persons who occupy them must maintain high levels of integration of the staff efforts around achieving the central purpose of the system.

Managing such a comprehensive educational system requires a staff which must necessarily go through an intensive, demanding, and lengthy training. When one considers that the full development of the innumerable potentialities of the human mind and character is far more complex and challenging than placing a man on the moon, it is not difficult to appreciate the need for extensive training and preparation for staff members of this new kind of educational system.

Releasing the Potentialities of the Educational System

The "learning competence" of a social system--the means whereby the potentialities of a group become translated into actuality--depends on the same processes which release the potentialities of the individual: differentiation and integration. Allen & Kline (1972, p. 15) observe that differentiated staffing:

> . . . .aims most directly at optimum release
> of discriminate human and professional potential
> toward the long-accepted educational ideal of

individualized learning for as many students
in our schools as possible.

The student counterpart of differentiated staffing is "individualized learners" whose individuality is recognized only if the instruction (arrangement of environments and guidance of interaction) is individualized. Staff differentiation is thus consistent with the model's basic theory of development and is not grafted on to the model only because it seems to be the thing to do at this moment in time.

Differentiation is possible in part because the model's objectives are clear and roles can be easily derived from them. As English (1972, p. 38) has observed, "without the presence of clear and measurable objectives, differentiated staffing may be an irrelevant solution looking for a problem." Objectives are not only important because they help identify tasks which may be grouped to define roles; they also represent purpose, and to the extent that there is a central purpose underlying the objectives, integration of the differentiated staff will take place. Most studies on differentiated staffing neglect integrative functions. Although problems with such a staffing arrangement can result from inappropriate differentiation (either too little, too much, or the wrong kind), most problems stem from lack of integrative power. The smooth functioning of any differentiated staffing structure depends on members of the staff sharing convictions about the purpose for which the structure exists in the first place. Without sense of purpose, differentiation degenerates into disunity very

easily. A noetic integrator unites people as well as ideas. The philosophical basis of the model is therefore essential to the success of staff differentiation and its effective integration. Consciousness of high purpose among all staff members enables differentiation to be fluid and in part situationally determined. The structure is then able to be open, non-rigid, and responsive to situational requirements. This is the source of spontaneous and creative individualization of instruction. Ultimately, this can only be achieved by training staff members on the job in an on-going system where a successfully differentiated staff works because it is effectively integrated.

The ANISA Model assumes that every school in the future will also be a teacher preparation site and that all staff members will be prepared by actively participating in all of the affairs of the school. In other words, training is based on the acquisition of knowledge about human growth and development and on learning how to apply all of the relevant theory and principles while actively engaged in working with children on a daily basis. Thus, theory is always seen in the context of practice designed to serve purpose. Integrative functions are largely affective in nature and need to be experienced rather than explained if they are to be internalized.