

Chapter 9

POLICY MAKING AND PLANNING IN CURRICULUM

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Thomas James, commenting more than a decade ago about authority and politics in educational change, observed that “education is a contested public good in American society [in which] agreements forged . . . through social conflict and political consensus become embedded, tacitly or explicitly, in law and policy” (1991, pp. 169–170). In the secular world, human actions emanate from and are justified under some authority. In the Western tradition, institutions of a society derive their character and importance from a source that has authorized them into existence and given them responsibility for particular functions on behalf of the people. In America, that authority has traditionally been the people, through law based on a written constitution. Important functions such as governance and education, and specific institutions like

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schools and courts of law reflect constitutionally intended purposes. What makes the intended purpose real is the actual behavior of the human actors, the workers who give the ideas and activities life. Central to that work are policy making and planning activities. The former, *policy making*, is really the process of interpreting what institutions and the people in them should do and then stating what it is that they will do while giving them the tools to do it. *Planning* can be thought of as the process of creating an image, graphic, or textual representation of how the intent of the policy will be carried out and how the tools will be used. In American education and schooling, the tradition has been for policy making and planning to occur at the local level of the township, county, town, and city. As Claudia Goldin and Lawrence Katz (1999a, 1999b) suggest in their studies, this tradition existed until World War II, and that power has since been gradually ceded to the state and federal governments. The purpose here is not to revisit that historical change but to discuss policy making and planning as kinds of work in curriculum.

POLICY MAKING IN CURRICULUM WORK

Schools in America are traditionally the responsibility of the individual state for the education of its citizens. This responsibility can be thought of in two ways, structural and functional. The structural refers to the arrangement of elements, such as when a state legislature authorizes the setting up of local school districts and the executive branch of government is authorized to administer or exercise control over the schools, usually by a state board of education. The functional side of creating schools is the delineation of what it is they are to do, the curriculum they will teach and other matters related to what you think of as schooling. Think of this creative process as involving two grants of authority, one enabling the constitution (legislative), the other being delegated, as in assigning administrative responsibility, with the executive branch, state, and district sharing different degrees of authority. This structural arrangement is depicted in Figure 9.1 in relation to the policy-making function and at what level this is shared. Certain caveats are in order. First remember that there are 50 different states, and the authority-policy-making relationship establishing responsibility and organization will vary according to each state constitution. Second, keep in mind that the usual pattern has been to cede to the local school district the authority and responsibility under some state board of education umbrella. At any time, that can be altered, and, since World War II, the states have tended toward centralized policy and planning functions or have at least moved toward a more shared responsibility with local districts. This tendency will probably accelerate as more schools are designated to be in some degree of jeopardy according to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and state expectations in meeting those requirements. Third, there is the realm of lawsuits and litigation over authority and responsibility not only under NCLB but regarding funding and other perceived

Figure 9.1 Policy-Making Authority, Responsibility, and Roles

<i>Responsible Unit</i>	<i>Authority</i>	<i>Policy Role</i>
State	A constitution usually gives general authority to the legislature for schools and specifies enabling authority, but it can be more detailed, specifying organizational details, responsibilities, and lines of authority.	Usually authorizes the legislature to create enabling laws that set up an organization plan.
Legislature Branch	Usually makes enabling laws that specify executive branch responsibility for education while retaining oversight through legislative committees and budgetary controls.	Enables laws essentially establishing policy, but the legislature can pass laws about policy as necessary.
Executive Branch	Governor is usually an ex officio member of the state board and, in some instances, hires the state superintendent.	Houses the department of education and can establish policy for state schools and districts through the department and board.
State Board	Either elected or appointed, it is the body delegated the authority for administration of the state system of schools.	The primary day-to-day operational policymaker exercising control through the state department and superintendent.
State Department	Follows board policy and promulgates and issues directives to carry out policy as the superintendent may direct. Depending on the specificity of a policy, the board may have discretion to interpret and implement through directives.	The most important operational role in state policy making. Usually has flexibility to delegate some discretionary operational authority for policy making to the local school districts depending on the constitutional arrangements.
School District	Local board and superintendent have administrative responsibility for schools consistent with state department policies and directives. Often given flexibility in implementing policy initiatives and directives.	Has important grants of authority to make policy in areas designated by the state board and as authorized under directives from the state department of education.

inequities that have to be interpreted and with which our traditional third branch of government, the courts, gets involved. Finally, what looks like a top-down relationship of delegated authority into layers of responsibility is really a bottom-up and top-down mix where policy initiatives, the basic ideas, can begin anywhere even though they ultimately require legislative enactment through law and or executive action for implementation.

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Although these structural-functional relationships are important in prefacing the matter of authority and empowerment, they also serve as a necessary prelude to understanding the critical activities of policy making and planning in schooling and curriculum work.

Law and Policy

Reiterating a crucial point, governance in American society begins with laws made under a constitution, and any authority and responsibility for doing something is assigned to some existing or created governmental agent or institution. The shared power to make laws involves specified grants of authority to do so. Laws are made at levels of authority such as the state legislature and a parish or town council, each having delegated authority in their sphere of interest. The relationship of law and policy is often likened to the chicken-egg question, which came first. Make no mistake, policy making follows from law as a grant of authority to create more laws or policy within a specified area of authority; school districts make policy for schools and schooling. You might think of this as primary and secondary lawmaking authority, such as the legislature's primary authority specified in the constitution and the secondary authority as what the legislature might grant to another agent. A second simple but important and often overlooked observation is that a legal grant of authority is essentially a piece of paper, inert until it is activated. The enabling or activation process, the act of putting something into effect, is always related to some expressed intent. What follows from enabling are the directives, usually written, that spell out the scope of authority and responsibility. In America, this has been traditionally referred to as establishing a policy, or policy making. As noted earlier, a policy has two faces: (a) as an idea prior to being enabled and (b) as a result of being enabled or made into a policy. This can be fraught with difficulties. In making policy, those responsible sometimes find they are unsure of what is intended, and they proceed to do things that were not intended. A reality sets in, the operative directive or order was faulty, vague, or both, perhaps a failure to clarify the intent implied in the directive or order, and often resources are not adequate to carry out responsibilities and organizational needs. This involves matters of scale and capacity, two ideas you will revisit later in this chapter. These interpretive voids can lead to mistakes and misinterpretations that have long-term consequences. In one notorious example, the infamous Supreme Court decision in the 1896 case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* in effect allowed the creation of two separate and unequal societies based on race and allowed the states to pursue policies of discrimination, particularly in regard to schools, that were not remedied until the Supreme Court reversed that ruling in 1954 in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*. This example highlights the realities of creating policy and the unexpected legal and social implications that derive from a grant of authority under law that is subject to interpretation. Your local school board, for example, has a prescribed grant of authority to enact policy in

specified areas such as locating schools, reviewing approved lists of texts for selection, deciding on more general things like dress and conduct codes, hiring personnel, and approving special-purpose curriculum such as character education and drug education for use in schools. There is, of course, a very real difference between U.S. Supreme Court decisions about policy and local school board dress code policy. However, to those affected, it is still a matter of policy with its effects.

What Is Policy Making?

An observation about policy work in general is that a policy is not necessarily a law, nor is derived from one, nor becomes a direct reality by the authority of some regulation or as promulgated in a specific document. Seem confusing? This points to an interesting subtlety. When considering what a policy requires, there is an important distinction to keep in mind—it can exist in two forms, as a statement or as an enactment. Ripley (1985), in an early study of policy analysis, refers to a *policy statement* as an expression of intent by some agent or agency and differentiates it from a *policy enactment*, where the agent or agency sets up the actions it will implement. A policy-making process begins in a statement about the policy desired, the enactment occurring either through a mix of further directives or legislation in pursuit of it by the policy-making agent or agency, or by a grant of authority to some other actor.

Policy making is a priority undertaking. From the creation of a policy movement, the super idea, flows the laws and regulations that govern all activity undertaken in pursuit of that policy. It begins with the floating of ideas into the public domain, a primary activity of interest groups, political parties, and other organized entities and individuals. The contemporary scene has numerous ideas seeking to become policy items. The movements for vouchers and charter schools are examples of ideas that groups are seeking to implement by influencing policy-making bodies, particularly state legislatures and the Congress of the United States. Probably the most important current policy initiative is the NCLB legislation, which is essentially a law putting into force a policy of accountability. In Figure 9.2, the policy-making process is suggested in relation to the development of the NCLB legislation in 2001. This is, of course, a very limited rendering of a far more time-consuming and complex deliberative process in promulgating the law. The effect of that policy has been alluded to in various preceding chapters and will occupy an important place in Chapter 13 and 14 discussions about issues and trends in curriculum and schooling.

Characteristics of Effective Policy Making

The world of policy making encompasses a variety of activities, from policy initiation to statements and enactments. Andrew Porter (1994) has studied policy matters and

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Figure 9.2 A Policy-Making Example

Policy Idea	In order to have a competitive, world-class educational system, there is a need for some centralized systematic accountability to evaluate school performance.
Policy Making	A law, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, is created by the United States Congress and signed by the president in 2002. The law is now national policy.
Policy Statement	The law as published (the official and primary statement) authorizes the U.S. Department of Education to establish regulations (secondary policy statements) as necessary to carry out the congressional intent, establishing among other things a process for evaluating schooling.
Policy Enactment	The U.S. Department of Education implements the law through directives that apply to any recipient/participant in a federally funded program and exercises authority as the official interpreter of the act.

Figure 9.3 General Policy and Curriculum Policy Characteristics

<i>General Policy Characteristics</i>	<i>Curriculum Policy Characteristics</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It must be <i>coherent</i>, as in being logical, orderly, and perhaps even aesthetic, in the relationships of its parts. • It must have <i>authority</i> specified so responsibility for executing the policy is clear. • It is <i>empowered</i> in itself, meaning it is not dependent on other agents to assist it and has sufficient resources to carry out its responsibilities. • It is <i>stable</i> in that it is coherent, has the requisite authority, and is empowered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It must be <i>articulate</i> and specify clearly what the curriculum is to be and how it is to be organized. • The policy is <i>self-explanatory</i>; it addresses itself so that participants or stakeholders understand what it is and how it will affect them operationally. • An articulate and explanatory policy earns <i>acceptance</i>, which enhances the possibility for successful implementation. • <i>Stability</i> depends on it being <i>replicable</i> and <i>feasible</i>; it can be applied in various school settings with a likelihood of success.

formulated a set of four characteristics that frame policy development and implementation. These general characteristics are summarized in Figure 9.3.

One characteristic is *coherence*; a policy makes sense as an entity unto itself and doesn't contradict other policies. It has to have *authority*, as in being legitimate through or under law. A third quality is *power*; a policy has to have some incentive system that

compels or inclines participants to support and become directly involved in the policy. Last is *stability*, the idea that a policy must be consistent over time, retaining support and a seamless existence. As with most formulations of elements or characteristics that are used to shape a frame of reference, there is no particular order to their consideration. This sense of random path building was suggested some years ago in Decker Walker's (1971) study of real-world curriculum work. Think of these elements as frames around a window: if you look left, down, up, or right, you encounter one of the frames that bound the window, but you ultimately have to encounter or consider all frames. Often, how you address the frames is a function of your own thinking or perceptual style, and, as suggested in Chapter 8, a reflection of your social-cultural understanding and your philosophy. In Figure 9.3, these are recast as characteristics in curriculum work and the formulation is a little different. In curriculum it requires *articulation*, formulating and confirming its intent, and *explication*, making it understandable to others. It has to be *acceptable*, as in suggesting how it will apply, in what cases, and with what result. Additionally, two other conditions seem warranted, it has to be *replicable* and *realizable* in application, meaning what applies in one place will be the same as another, and those using or implementing the curriculum believe it will work. For example, any educational policy must have stability. If it is a policy about curriculum, that stability factors into characteristics of being replicable and feasible. To get some idea of how policy making relates to schooling and curriculum, consider the case for comprehensive schooling made after World War II when returning veterans came home, marriage boomed, and so did the numbers of children soon to enter school. The upshot was a need to develop some way of schooling for the diverse needs of that burgeoning population, a challenge taken up by the National Education Association (NEA) and James Bryant Conant, respected president of Harvard and influential advisor on science education matters. The NEA was at that time not the labor union of today but the national forum for discussing all things educational. In two 1947 reports issued under the auspices of the NEA and two later books by James Conant, *The American High School Today* (1959) and *The Comprehensive High School* (1967), the movement to reinvent schools and particularly secondary schooling prompted policy initiatives in the form of reports and books outlining what curriculum should be like, initiated new functions such as guidance and counseling, and influenced thinking to mesh architectural form with curricular intentions. The policy initiatives that became laws were primarily in states like California and New York. At the federal level, the most important event was the enactment of the National Defense Education Act in 1958 and related federal legislation that followed over the next decade. The carrot was the money being offered at the federal level, which led schools and teachers to participate in the new math and science curriculums under the National Defense Education Act. The stick was that to authorize participation, the states in varying degrees were to imitate comprehensive school ideas by enacting their own laws: financing school construction and developing curriculum and related services in line with the reports and Conant's

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recommendations. Using the comprehensive high school movement as an example and applying the characteristics of curriculum policy making helps to illustrate how policy making works.

Articulation

The formulation of a comprehensive school policy began with the reports of the NEA and its affiliates, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. The specific curriculum ideas emerged as ways to expand the curriculum to serve vocational, college preparatory, and general job or business (as it was referred to at the time) interests as appropriate to individual and community needs. It was a set of policy proposals to achieve a standard curriculum and make it equally available to all students with supporting services to enhance learner success. Whereas the primary aim was the high school and secondary education, curriculum scope and sequence led to considerations about K–12 schooling as well. As noted in Chapter 7, the history of change in schooling has been predominately a top-down affair, with colleges dictating curriculum to high schools and they to middle/junior high schools, who in turn influence elementary schools; schooling is a flow-through process. The idea of schooling being a flow-through process seems rather simplistic, but it has very important implications for articulating curriculum. First, the idea of flow-through made it acceptable to consider curriculum from top to bottom. It made it easier for the National Science Foundation and academic discipline experts to suggest a curriculum structure for science and mathematics. Second, because they were the experts, their views were acceptable and they were able to articulate a K–12 science and mathematics curriculum scope and sequence. Third, the legitimacy gained in science and mathematics articulation carried over into social studies, arts, and other areas of the curriculum. This was not, of course, in the same vein as contemporary efforts to articulate standards and assessments, but it created the possibility for that. What was and is still missing is the joining of standards with a clearly articulated curriculum scope and sequence. That is an issue that will be discussed further in Chapter 13.

Explanation

The set of proposals under the comprehensive school banner was made easily understandable in Conant's books. With Carnegie Foundation support, the book received free distribution to all NEA members and a wider circulation to political, business, and community leaders. Reading either of Conant's books, one is struck by the careful marshaling of evidence and the direct connection to a curriculum recommendation—elegant simplicity followed by a clear discussion, relevant to and in the language of the public. Parallel to Conant's ideas, other elements in support were being marshaled. The cold war was reality, and a well-educated citizenry would enhance national defense.

More subtly argued to influence the federal government was the point that American success against communism was dependent on engineers and scientists that were well schooled in sciences and mathematics. America's international leadership role and political power necessitated development of a cadre of experts with knowledge of other parts of the world. There followed an expansion of curriculum projects into languages and social sciences because language and knowledge experts in such areas as Chinese, Russian, and Slavic studies were needed. It is interesting to note that studies focusing on the nations of the Middle East, Mexico, and the Americas were not considered as important, a lack of foresight and balance that would later lead to a serious lack of such experts, particularly those with fluency in the languages and knowledge of the Middle East.

Acceptance

Gaining acceptance for a proposed policy involves perceptions about needs and wants, and the transparency of intentions by advocates. Acceptance is sought at two levels at least. The first is the public the policy would serve, and the second is the participants: teachers, administrators, and scholars whose work the policy will most directly affect. For the public, acceptability may mean simply the legitimacy of who says it is needed and the level of trust that provides. For the participant crowd, it is a matter of reasonable proof, the development of assessments with evaluation that give weight to arguments for or against a policy. Matters of assessment and evaluation are a particular kind of curriculum work and await discussion in Chapter 12. For the audiences at either level, there are several key considerations. Is the problem or the perception of a need evident in the target audience or the public in general? And, if so, is it wanted—is there a perception that the proposal fits the need? The condition of American schooling in the immediate postwar years was one of benign neglect. There was a general public sense of the need to refurbish schools because materials for civilian use had been committed to the war effort, school building had languished, books and materials were old, and teachers had entered military service so that few were in the teacher education process. The effects of the inevitable neglect of the war years, such as old curriculum materials and aging schools, along with the immediate need to expand public schooling to accommodate the new wave of children entering kindergartens and who would in a few years overwhelm high school capabilities, were compelling evidence. It was a time when an articulate, explicated proposal was saleable and acceptable, especially for curriculum and particularly for what would be called the new mathematics and sciences. There was a generally observed public need energized by the end of war and a feeling that it was time to get on with life! Reading in the newspapers and the editorials of the day, you get a sense of the public trust for authorities and experts to run things in the best interests of the people. Selling America on America was not an issue in 1946 or during the Korean War in the early 1950s. The skeptical times would come later.

Replicability

The matter of replicating a proposal is more tenuous than other characteristics because replication is synonymous with duplication and copy. Applied to curriculum policy making, replication does not refer to replication of images, that associated with the machine process of duplicating or copying a whole thing like this page you are reading. Rather, replication refers to application, as in a conceptualization that is dependent on the inclusion of proposal particulars as they fit the situation or circumstance. Think of second-grade teachers Archer and Smith who are implementing the nine-step Fictitious Reading Process. The process is nine steps and has to be used that way. However, each will use it consistent with considerations of and knowledge about the classroom setting, the children as individuals and readers, the complexity of the process, and the framework or guidelines for implementation. If you were to observe their work, you would probably note how each teacher maintains the integrity of purpose for the process while modifying the implementation based on the factors noted. The integrity of the process in this example is maintained, but the process is adjusted to fit the context in which it is placed—that's replication. Obviously, in some curriculum policy work, the integrity of the policy is important, but it is also important to remember that the proposal must form a fit with other considerations that will vary across settings and sociocultural concerns. Proposals for the comprehensive school curriculum would of necessity need to fit the local setting and conditions and be modifiable as they were implemented. A model for an urban or suburban setting might not fit in a rural setting or the reverse. There is also the local reception to curriculum change. People in rural areas living farm lives might not perceive the new math or science curriculum as essential to work and life in the countryside. Those in a community with high-tech opportunities or who expect their children to enter college might think otherwise. Articulation is about implementation itself, not about whether it is selectively or universally applied. There is sometimes the specter of eliteness: which group gets the new curriculum, which doesn't, and how and by whom those decisions are made. In the mix of characteristics, matters of replication can often highlight the failures to articulate, explain, and gain acceptance of a policy and what follows from it.

Feasibility

A proposal may fulfill all the preceding conditions and still not be feasible. You are probably familiar with the term *feasibility study*, referring to making a determination about whether something is workable. The literature on contemporary school and curriculum reform proposals since 1983 (e.g., Cohen & Hill, 2001; Gamoran, 1998) suggests that for a proposed policy to be feasible or tangible (e.g., the creation of a curriculum), it must be seen as matching the intent of the policy statement and that it can be accomplished. When the NCLB of 2001 was passed, the United States Congress and the president were declaring that act to be feasible. In the few years since its inception, state

experiences with its implementation suggest, however, that there are problems that bring the assumptions underlying feasibility into question, a point Benjamin Levin raised in an earlier 1998 study. Problems with the workability of such a law are not uncommon and can result from different perceptions of whether a policy result reflects the policy as intended and as written into the laws and acts to carry out a policy. Policy makers may see it one way, participants or observers another, for any number of reasons: The intended may not occur, what was replicable fails to fit, what was acceptable may lose support over the time it takes to implement, or replication may not prove viable with the conditions of implementation. All these factors suggest the fragility inherent in policy making. A policy flourishes to the degree each of its constituent elements is implemented and fulfilled as it was intended.

In applying those measures of success to the proposals for a comprehensive high school and its new curriculum, there was an overall effectiveness in creating a standard of curriculum that was variously implemented across states and communities. One measure of success would seem to be whether a person could move from one place to another, from one curriculum to another, and fit into that new curriculum without personal penalty. The historical record suggests that test was met. A second measure, one also initially as subjective, was whether there would be a residual curriculum impact—that is to say, would the new approaches in curriculum result in improved learning? The failure to implement evaluations for most aspects of the policy is a notorious deficiency. However, the need to answer the second question led to another significant policy, the development of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Over time, the historical trail of events and results from that assessment program suggest that the policy decision for the NAEP was a step forward, and at least anecdotal evidence suggests the reforms were a success in their time and place. Possibly the most important residual effect of the comprehensive school movement and subsequent curriculum changes was the growing role and clout of the federal government in Washington in all matters educational, especially in schooling and increasingly in curriculum.

PERSPECTIVE INTO PRACTICE: Policy, Curriculum, and Implications at the Elementary and Secondary Level		
<i>Policy-Making Level</i>	<i>Elementary Application</i>	<i>Secondary Application</i>
At the national level, in the NAEP , certain curriculum knowledge area discrepancies are found from last year's scores.	NAEP results indicate fourth-grade science learning has slipped nationally but unevenly by state, suggesting individual states need to study the problem.	NAEP science scores at the 10th-grade level have not changed compared to last year's results. However, analysis suggests certain weaknesses in knowledge about biology in some state scores.

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<p>The State Board of Education, based on a comparative review of state and NAEP data by the State Department of Education, develops a policy to review key curriculum areas.</p>	<p>The state has required each district to review results across affected schools and, as applicable, submit a plan of corrective action for the district and/or identified schools, submitted in a report with material resource, curriculum, and personnel needs.</p>	<p>State data suggest 14 school districts with deficiencies. State department science specialists and State Science Advisory Board experts meet with identified districts' curriculum specialists and biology teachers to develop responses to a State Board policy directive to address problems.</p>
<p>The local school board directs the district curriculum staff to prepare recommendations for the board to approve and send to the state, including a plan of action, materials, staffing, and assistance needs the district can supply, together with a request for any additional assistance in those areas where district capacity is inadequate.</p>	<p>Assistance is needed in reading in two low-performing elementary schools. The district temporarily reassigns three specialists and requests matching assistance in personnel or funds to hire the same.</p>	<p>The district board creates a science advisory panel coordinated by the science curriculum specialist, with biology experts from the local college, a scientist provided by a local biomedical company, and the biology/science secondary faculty to study discrepancies and make recommendations, immediate and long range, for biology and then for other sciences, such as chemistry and physics, commensurate with the state test data.</p>

PLANNING IN CURRICULUM WORK

In discussing policy making and policy-related elements, one element in particular, planning, has been alluded to but touched on lightly. Policy does not just fall into place, it requires thinking about how to implement it, what course or courses of action to take. In a word, it needs a plan. Simply put, a *plan* segues from policy to implementation. Planning can be a random exercise, such as children planning to build a tree house and proceeding while adjusting activities as they learn along the way. In the adult, academic sense of it, planning should take on a robustness that adheres to certain practices found to be useful or proven useful as part of a particular vocation, profession, or practice. Teachers, for example, have lesson plans. These are usually composed of goals or objectives, a series of steps to implement them, identification of curriculum to be taught, instructional tools to use, and some immediate feedback loop for evaluation of the experience. That is the general sense of planning and a plan. Having been introduced to the

matter of policy and policy making as part of the world of curriculum work, now consider what comes next: the formality of planning that follows in curriculum work once policy has been established.

Characteristics of Effective Planning

Planning, like policy making, is characterized by certain conditions. There is an old adage in the military that “proper planning prevents poor performance,” the so-called 5 Ps of success. In curriculum, the planning focus is also on proper planning so that a developed curriculum will perform satisfactorily in the actual living of it in schools. The word “proper” unfortunately conveys the idea that there is a particular way of doing planning; you need to keep in mind that there is no single model but many models, a veritable menu of models, and they often differentiate by the profession or kinds of tasks for which they are formulated. A planning model in engineering or one in mathematics is distinguished by the knowledge area, purpose, and context of its use. The differences in planning a mission to the moon and a 30-minute lesson plan for curriculum engagement in an elementary classroom might seem extreme; however, each in its own way is important and leads to consequence of scale, specific results, and long-term effects. Inherent in each is a planning process and, as some studies (Boostrom, Jackson, & Hanson, 1993; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) seem to suggest, there are at least four qualities that are important in planning as a work activity in curriculum: outlining or creating a *perspective*, establishing a *framework*, identifying a *design*, and creating *documentation* that serves as a record of the activities and a body of data that can be revisited.

Planning Perspective

A perspective (see earlier discussions in Chapters 1 and 3) refers to the cognitive or intellectual angle from which you look at and distill the critical elements from a policy that must be followed or included if the policy is to be implemented as intended. It forms a formal, shared understanding about how to commonly think about the work to be undertaken. Two aspects of planning are important here. One, perhaps the most important, is to uncover the embedded perspective the policy makers used and agree upon its implied intent. Second, and consonant with the first, is to focus on the purposes or goals for which the curriculum change is intended. Keeping those in mind is important if the results of the policy, which flow from planning, are to attain what was intended. A consensus on the perspective does not mean workers must all think the same way; rather, the importance is to raise a common consciousness about the policy’s interpretive, operational frame of reference and applicable policy directives. Differing perceptions that appear can suggest and point to a working group’s professional knowledge needs that will encourage and enhance the composite of personal-professional philosophical points of view that participants bring to the work. As discussed in

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Chapters 5 and 8, the foundational professional beliefs formulated by you frame your perspective and are always at the front of your involvement. That philosophical personalization is embedded in two points that are important here. First, it is essential to remember that the planning function should provide the framework for curriculum development and other work under the policy umbrella. Second, planning reflects multiple perspectives, the personal professional ones of each worker, and the shared formal perspective developed to guide planning. Inherent in a professional perspective is recognition that it is one among other possible perspectives that might be constructed. A perspective developed to guide work is similar to the formation of what Decker Walker (1990) refers to as the “deliberative platform” in his model of curriculum work. Simply stated, the perspective is what is created when one responds to the thought, “Now how am I going to do this?” and comes up with a way to proceed. It is the creating of a frame of reference, a construction for thinking about and doing curriculum planning work.

Framework

Central to curriculum planning is the creation of a framework that serves two essential purposes. First, it has to function as a frame of reference, a guide for thinking about curriculum based on an articulated perspective. Second, the framework should identify and set up the actions that take place in preparation for segueing into other types of curriculum work: development, management/maintenance, and assessment-evaluation activities, for example. The framework becomes a mental picture, like a blueprint that is preparatory and guides building construction, a map that allows one to traverse a landscape, or a recipe as in cooking. Blueprints, maps, and recipes are preliminary guides that frame the range of thinking about actions to be taken. The frame-of-reference-as-framework allows for creative changes in the doing of other curriculum work that follows from it. Teachers in contemporary classrooms are responding in various ways to the NCLB as interpreted and extended to classroom matters. An individual teacher and his or her colleagues have to “react” and possibly interpret what is expected of them. They already possess a professional perspective and may be concerned and reticent about the unknowns where accountability is the byword. In short, they have a framework but it may not fit; they may not have been provided an opportunity to conform or convert to policy that has been sent down to them but not explained to them at the school and classroom level (Swanson & Stevenson, 2002).

Design

The framework bounds another aspect of planning, creating an image, a form, of what the curriculum might look like, as in something imagined but not developed. This is the scheme of things, the heart of the framework, a design of something. The

problem is that among curriculum writers and scholars, there is no precise, consistent use of design. Some consider the whole matter of planning that is included in curriculum development as, for example, a “design” (Armstrong, 2003) phase or as creating an “organizational pattern” (Walker, 1990). The term *design* is used here not as “curriculum design” but in the larger meaning of design as a creative process of representing something before it is articulated in its details, as in a house design before it is drawn architecturally in its details. Designs occur after a plan has been formulated, and they are based on the particulars set forth in a plan. This gives the process of design a pliable rather than fixed quality that is important and allows reference to the activities of policy making as the foundation for plans and then designs. The design function in planning is part of the planning process, not necessarily a result. The better-known references to design are adaptive ones; those cited most often in curriculum books (see Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 2002; Schubert, Schubert, Thomas, & Carroll, 2002) carry titles such as fusion, broad-fields, core, and subject matter curriculum, which will be discussed in Chapter 10 (or you can consult the Glossary). Each represents a planning process based on a particular design but not necessarily a specified way of actually creating a curriculum from a design, as in thinking about the transition of making a dress or suit from design to pattern to product.

Documentation

Often what is missing in curriculum work is a record of proceedings: in short, a record in written or other data form that confirms (documents) what has occurred. Think of the minutes of a meeting that as nearly as possible represent an accurate report of what went on. It is essential to have a recorded history of deliberations, a calendar of work and notations of how something was planned, designed, and managed. Documentation simply refers to the need to create a record that mirrors what was done, when, and by whom. Documentation already exists at the policy-making level because the policy itself is in some written form (see the discussion in Chapter 4). Even so, it may lack notational details that help one understand the policy-making process out of which the document arose. Documenting the planning function that issues from policy provides a record of work and if, for example, a curriculum is to be developed based on the planning, it helps to have rich documentation so the planning process holds as faithfully to policy as possible. School board meetings, for example, have official records that are usually both written and voice recorded so there is a redundancy in verifying the decisions and discussions that occur. In curriculum and schooling, documentation takes many forms, such as assessments, evaluations, notes, written papers, and anecdotal compilations, and is found at all levels of curriculum work. Several examples of methods or formats for documenting work are also management tools; curriculum-mapping, for example, discussed in Chapter 11, and assessment and evaluation tools, discussed in Chapter 12, can be documentation tools as well.

Factors Affecting the Complexity of Planning

Planning in curriculum work is very much a process of elaboration. Often it is the proceeding from something simply understood through degrees of complexity, a layering that builds up or adds to what is meant originally. There are several factors affecting elaboration and the degree to which it is needed; these aspects refer to the matters of scale, responsibility and capacity in planning and, as you will encounter in the next several chapters, other curriculum work. The simplicity or complexity of the planning work being undertaken will determine the degree of significance each factor assumes in the planning activity.

Scale and Capacity

The creation of a policy does not mean that a single, specific, common plan will necessarily follow from it. Much depends on scale and capacity, two terms previously discussed in Chapter 4. Suppose a school board establishes policy X and directs administrators to implement it. Several scenarios are possible. The superintendent could direct the central administrative staff to create a plan. Another option is to direct each school principal to come up with his or her own plan. Those considerations about the units to be involved represent the scale of effect, the numbers and inclusive settings affected by the policy. In a centralized approach, there is one plan for all. When the planning task is decentralized, there could be as many plans as there are schools; obviously the scale will vary. The characteristics in planning, the perspective, framework, design, and documentation, would all be affected in different ways. The capacity of a unit such as a school is what it is capable of doing, the capital consisting of people, resources, funds, and so forth that allow it to do its mission. For example, it is difficult for a school to provide an up-to-date curriculum if the materials are out of date or if the teaching faculty doesn't keep up with what is going on in their particular knowledge area or doesn't have the special support to retain that capability.

Variation in Standards

One of the problems with current curriculum standards reform, such as the NCLB, is the variation in standards both across state standards and within content areas such as mathematics and history. The efforts to change curriculum as part of the larger school reform movement are often interpreted as based on a "one size fits all" perspective, whereas each state and the various curriculum content experts tend to see standards and planning as state or discipline specific. The matter of the perspective from which these issues are viewed looms large in these debates. The Council on Basic Education has, for example, historically been an advocate of liberal arts curriculum, particularly the

arts and humanities, and a watchdog for curricular imbalance, that is to say, less time devoted to the study of that part of the school curriculum. Their survey of school principals in the United States (Council on Basic Education, 2004) suggests that the humanities, arts, and social studies curriculums are receiving less instructional time than other curriculum areas. One inference is that this is due to the emphasis on meeting standards in math and science curriculum. A second implication, the matter of the perspective taken, is that the scope and sequence of the total curriculum are out of balance, with not enough time devoted to those curriculums. Of course, if you were of the perspective that math and science are more important, then it is unlikely you would see an imbalance. The heart of those issues is the curriculum. It is partly a contemporary concern about policy and planning for curriculum standards, an almost eerie reprise of Herbert Spencer's question, "What knowledge is of most worth?" It is also partially a struggle over what agent or agency will have policy responsibility for deciding curriculum issues. In choosing one agent over another, there is also the problem of settling on one particular framework for planning over another, perhaps without knowing the particulars of either framework that will guide planning or design decisions. If either the Council on Basic Education or the National Science Foundation were given master control over the curriculum, you could surmise in what direction curriculum policy and planning would take.

Responsibility and Control

Central to any policy-planning discussion is the matter of responsibility and who will control the process. As noted earlier in this chapter, policy making and the planning that may issue rely on clear statements of assigned responsibility and having the capacity to carry out the work. If there are several agents under consideration, will control be outright or shared? For example, under the NCLB, it is very murky as to whether federal or state authorities have responsibility for some aspects of planning or making further policy at the state level to implement mandates, an important and as yet unresolved matter of legal standing in the federal relationship. Given that you know the constitutional divides in America, what would and should be the role of the federal government and individual states? What part should local districts, nationally influential lobbies, interest groups, and professional organizations play? As Meredith Honig (2004) suggests in her studies of the role of such intermediary organizations in educational policy, at the present time, the matter of control over curriculum and other aspects of schooling is still contested. Matters of policy and planning in curriculum work that affect American schooling hinge on these legal mechanisms and the power influence of those various forces. With a federal rather than centralized arrangement of authority, it will continue to be that way. Those, however, are issues ripe for a more extended discussion in Chapter 13.

STATE AND LOCAL POLICY AND PLANNING

Who are other players in curriculum policy and planning work? The parties already mentioned include the key federal and state agencies such as the U.S. Department of Education and state departments of education or instruction, as they are variously titled. The general public in the local context is aware of most policy making and associated planning. That's because stories about it appear in the local papers, it is the subject of local TV reports, or an announcement about it comes home from school with the family students in some form, perhaps a newsletter. Policy in the broad sense is the responsibility of the school board, most often based on policy initiatives either given to or requested by the board from the school superintendent and staff. Again, keep in mind that this will vary by states and sometimes by local tradition and law. Policy aside, curriculum planning usually is the province of the district central office and usually handled by a curriculum supervisor or someone in a similar midmanagement position. Because there are a range of policy and planning possibilities and a variety of contributors, a look at the impetus for policy and planning, the relationships that direct those activities at the state and local levels, is in order.

State Mandates

The primary locations for all kinds of policy and planning work about schools and schooling are the individual states. As suggested earlier, the granting of policy-making authority in a state usually begins with legislative action. A state constitution may also direct that the authority be vested in a particular body or department such as a state board of education but gives the legislature statutory authority to create that body and specify its powers. The key point to keep in mind is that legislatures usually delegate responsibility to another body. They may attach strings, but the work is done elsewhere. The legislature at times effects curriculum change through legislation that tells the state board or some other authority to do a certain thing. It is not uncommon for state legislatures to do that, especially establishing special mandates like those for economic education, character education, or some other addition to the curriculum or school program. They can also establish policy about instructional time, days in the school year, and other schooling matters that can impact curriculum and teaching. Usually the manner of implementing policy, how it will be planned and carried out, and who will bear the responsibility, is left to the state board's discretion. In that case, curriculum-planning work assumes a central work importance. One recent extension of state mandates has been in the area of policy development in response to NCLB of 2001. That law can be seen as either suggesting or requiring intrusion (Elmore, 2002; Kohn, 2001) into schools in a state if assessment-evaluation results indicate a school is failing according to some measure, either a federal one or one that the state has set up. Keep in mind that

the concept of failure or of a failing school is tied to tests and attendance and does not take into account cultural, ethnic, historical, or social factors at the local school community level. Identifying failing schools as far as states are concerned has to do with student performance on tests, not what they may or may not know, or other factors previously mentioned. State remediation responses have ranged from taking over a failed school, providing money to employ staff or experts in an effort to build on-site or school or district capacity to remediate, reconstituting school boards, closing schools permanently or reopening with all new staff, transferring students, opting for alternative schools such as charters, and, in some citywide school districts, turning the matter over to the mayor or a specific group of experts set up to run the district. A casual reading of *Education Week* offers a continuous presentation of such examples. Some studies (James, 1991; Loveless, 1998) of this new mandating role suggest that the crucial factor is the capacity of the state department of education to plan and implement such activities and that, with a few exceptions, state-level departments have not been up to the task.

The Textbook Review Process

At the state level of government, one of the most important curriculum work functions related to policy and planning is the process of reviewing and selecting textbooks. Whereas other curriculum work matters seem routine (e.g., creating scope and sequence documents or directives about reading and subject matter areas), planning for text selection is often the most notorious and interesting. Although it varies, each state has some procedure for approving curriculum materials for use by school districts. Some allow districts to set up their own publisher solicitation and approval procedure. Others do it through the state department of education, which then creates textbook review committees. Committee participants are usually chosen according to some politically agreed-on formula to include laypersons (prominent citizens, for example); appointees by the governor, appointees by key legislative leaders, curriculum experts, particularly college or university faculty; and schooling representatives such as school teachers, administrators, and staff. Whether it is a state- or district-established approval process, it is often a contested one.

The planning process for selecting texts usually proceeds according to curriculum areas, social studies, mathematics, and so forth. It is usually cyclical—mathematics one year, language arts the next—giving the process a rhythmic quality. The distance in years between reviews varies by state but a curriculum text is often in use for up to 6 or 8 years before it is replaced, and sometimes legislatures extend that when there is a budget crisis. There is also a related obsolescence issue. After several years of use, the content is not current in conveying the latest knowledge or scope and sequence changes. Even a new textbook takes 2 years to develop, though the evolution through editions

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after that does allow for keeping the contents somewhat current. State boards and the state department of education often must do additional planning in curriculum areas where text obsolescence creates obvious knowledge gaps. Teachers are often aware of this with regards to history and science texts that are outdated. In most states, planning for text selection includes developing content specifications for textbooks so that publisher submissions have met some preliminary set of criteria. The committee's task is to review and recommend which texts should be approved, that is to say, those that in the judgment of the committee most closely "fit" the state course of study for the curriculum or other criteria being used. Following a series of meetings that may take most of a year, the state department of education takes the committee-approved recommendations to the state board for its consideration and approval. The crucial point is reached during the series of public meetings where any interested citizen can ask to speak. These can be contentious sessions, especially when advocates for sensitive issues offer comments about curriculum materials. In Texas, California, and other volume text-purchasing states, the stakes are obviously high and legislative approval is important. Publishers often have to meet special requirements such as ensuring accuracy and including changes and modifications to content. In some cases, the state itself may take action in the form of disclaimers in texts or the issuance of specially constructed curriculum materials in place of some offending text content or as a supplement to some perceived content deficiency.

The whole textbook selection process, regardless of the state in which it occurs, is a reflection of how curriculum planning works at the state level. And, to a degree, what happens there affects how and what planning occurs at the local district level. The degrees of freedom allowed in selecting textbooks and other curriculum materials, the range of vendors and choices, and the number of texts approved can affect local curriculum planning options. Another problem is that districts may be confined to text choices they don't think are the best academically for their students and communities. Or special interests at the local level may complain about the content in the same way they did at the state level and require some form of compromise. In states where it is a more decentralized process and districts evaluate texts, textbook committee composition may also involve similar political considerations about what is selected.

Aside from the charged process of text approval, most curriculum planning functions are fairly mundane and noncontroversial. States, particularly the state department of education, maintain a capacity for continuous planning because they need to serve the state board, the state superintendent, and legislative committees dealing with K-12 educational matters, all of whom request research information, ask for testimony, and make other demands that require considered responses. Governors often sit as *ex officio* heads of the state boards and in some instances appoint the members. As head of the executive branch, governors also influence planning by creating agendas for the state,

which can in some cases be carried out by executive order. The dual legislative and executive influence further reinforces the need for a responsive planning capability that in turn gives guidance by creating plans that provide a framework for school district implementation.

Mandates and Expectations in the School District

School districts have the authority to establish policy within the constraints established under the state constitution and powers exercised by the legislative and executive branches of government. What follows in terms of planning responsibilities will vary from state to state. However, several comments about planning do apply in a general way. Often, the state makes mandates on what schools are to do both operationally and with curriculum. These affect the kinds of curriculum issues with which school districts have to deal, their responsibilities and capabilities in regard to them, and the expectations that accompany them in the community they serve. Policy and planning matters usually don't appear on the radar screen unless they are controversial. What's controversial? Check out your local newspaper and the school board reports and you will get some hint. Most of it is routine but important, such as developing policies about school bus routes, appropriate dress (an example of the hidden curriculum), budget matters, food services, and related operational issues.

Outside of increasing taxes, sports, and dress issues, few things matter more or become more controversial than what affects what is to be learned, the curriculum. A requirement to teach economic education or character education can require extra time and unexpected expenditures for materials to the detriment of some other curriculum. An increase in state graduation requirements, more mathematics and science, for example, means something else has to give, usually something in the arts and social studies curriculum. That may not sit well with local parents and students because it may be seen as a threat to students' career desires or even to their graduation. Public acceptance of changes in schooling is premised on the expectation that curriculum requirements will remain consistent and adjustments will not unduly threaten their students' successful passage through the schooling process. The general tendency of the public is to understand that as times change, so does knowledge and thus the curriculum, but radical departures must be justified; what you remember about your curriculum experience pref-aces in a general way what you think students should be learning moderated by the changes in knowledge that have occurred since your time in school. Possible clashes between parent and school are likely when there is a parental perception of messing with a child's schooling, sometimes attributable to the mismatch between a parent's expectations and perceptions and the reality of school life, curriculum, and policies pursued.

Beyond the individual school problems with curriculum, there is also the pressure on schools, administrators, and local boards from interest groups. Certainly, one of

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the most vocal and demanding groups are parents of children with special needs. The push-pull effect of different federal policy initiatives from one administration to another often results in confusing policy changes. One year, special needs children are pulled out of regular classrooms to receive assistance; the next year, special teachers are embedded in the classroom. And so it goes as policy changes. Think of the changes in planning that are needed to accommodate such policy shifts and remember the attendant start-up costs that attach to planning and implementing a new policy. The financial capacity to provide not just a meat-and-potatoes curriculum but one with salad and dessert translates into money for supplemental texts; the latest in laboratory and support materials, such as maps and software programs; and advanced placement and honors curriculum courses. The differences in district financial capacity is a problem across the nation—what basic level of curriculum is necessary to ensure equity is the question now headed to the courts in a number of states.

Local Responsibilities and Capabilities

Suppose a state board of education under its policy authority directs the state department and superintendent to review elementary reading programs in the state. After the review, the state board of education recommends that there are too many different programs and the state should focus on one approach, either whole language or phonics. Sidestepping this polemical issue, the state board establishes a policy letting local districts decide the matter. Responsibility for policy and planning has been set; the state board has passed the matter to the local level. Establishing a reading policy and planning for it are now the obligation of the local board and district. Given this speculative situation, what options are there? At least two options are possible. They can choose one or the other reading approach and proceed to provide the relevant curriculum. A second choice might be to provide curriculum for both options so the teacher can adapt a flexible approach based on what works with individual students. The net effect in choice two is that the decision is made at the classroom level. Any of these choices carries with it important capability considerations. Proposals for curriculum change also entail new responsibilities. Consider the following aspects that need to be included in curriculum planning where the curriculum is being changed by adoption of a new text or textbook series.

Funding. A new curriculum requires new books and other materials. Where will funds come from? The state? The district? Does the local district budget have funding set aside? If there is no contingency for this new curriculum, where will adjustments be made in the district budget and will that be at the expense of some other area of the curriculum? Funding will also be needed for professional development work and other needs.

Training. Every new curriculum entails some professional development/in-service time. Central office staffs, usually the appropriate curriculum specialist, prepare to lead the implementation. They must become the district's curriculum authority, conducting curriculum workshops, giving presentations, and being generally ready to assist teachers with the curriculum and the range of materials with which they will work. If there is no in-district training capability, where does it come from? Publishing houses often provide consultant service for training district personnel according to the cost of the purchase package. These services may include training appropriate in-district curriculum specialists or conducting familiarization sessions for teachers for on-site training. The amount of training or consulting assistance accessible is usually scaled according to the amount of money spent. Take the example of adopting an American history text for high school. If it is a text-only purchase, the assistance package will be limited in comparison to a text-plus-supplementary-materials package.

Resources. In addition to funding and training issues, curriculum planning work may entail other resource needs. Training or provision of explanatory materials may mean the copying or printing of reproducible materials that accompany the text. Videos, CDs, or other training media will require appropriate supporting technology that must also be accessible. Districts with limited technical capabilities, portable or fixed, or with limited funds for such equipment will be at a disadvantage in planning.

Support. A fourth and often overlooked factor in planning is considering after-adoption support needs. Sustaining the curriculum after implementation means planning for the long term. Texts and other curriculum materials have an obsolescence factor. Content in new materials is usually out of date at publication and obviously becomes more so as the years of use increase. Texts are usually in use from 6 to 8 years. Support is needed in updating materials or developing strategies such as using the Internet or in some other way updating curriculum materials for classroom use. Curriculum planning at the local level should be long-term.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING

Policy and planning outside state jurisdictions have historically taken on a cooperative character. There being no specific grant of constitutional authority to the federal government, the national policy has traditionally been one of encouraging and supporting the larger realm of education in addition to K-12 schooling. As noted at other points in this book, federal laws, like those establishing the land grant colleges in 1863 or setting aside land in territories for schools or supporting vocational schooling, were not meant

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to specify what the curriculum should be but to encourage schooling in a general way. What has evolved is an informal but influential set of collaborative relationships involving both governmental units and quasi-governmental and other agencies and organizations that are national in their interests and influence. These various categories of organizations and entities play important roles in the national and regional arena. They serve as important forums for discussing national policy matters, particularly where a common national policy rather than 50 different state variations is needed. National stages are essential in societies that consider themselves democratic. National and regional organizations serve as forums where issues are raised and ideas about social progress can be aired for public consideration. Recall that prior to its recasting as a union some 50 years ago, the NEA served such a purpose. Today it falls into a role as a union that serves teachers nationally and, along with the American Federation of Teachers, forms an important group of advocacy organizations concerned with schools and schooling issues. The various roles and activities of the federal government have already been mentioned in discussing some aspects of curriculum work at the national level. The exceptions to all this harmonious history are the current movement to establish standards for schooling and the implied but unspoken creation of a national curriculum. The former, standards, is mentioned here because it breaks new ground in the relationships among governmental units and those that are not governmental. The parties to this contentiousness are important, a point to be discussed more extensively later in this chapter.

The changing dynamics of policy making make it increasingly important for curriculum workers at all levels to be aware of the kinds of organizations, their purposes, and what they seek to influence. There are many important and interesting players who can influence curriculum work, educational policy making, and planning in general. These can be generally grouped into three categories. One is the more easily identifiable quasi-governmental organization with interests in educational matters and that has some purpose and affiliation with government. The second, interstate education agents, is a collection of various associations with primarily regional and national educational interests that include curriculum. This categorization also includes usually nonprofit educational entities including foundations and institutes. Last are the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that may have regional, national, and sometimes international interests and affiliations and are often found in a special relationship to government and other institutions in a society (Stromquist, 2002). The NGOs' interest in education or curriculum is usually secondary to their charter or mandates.

It is not always easy to place an organization neatly in any particular category; they sometimes seem to have charters or stated purposes that bridge from one category to another. Nonetheless, it is useful to consider such categorizations, and where an organization falls can be usefully differentiated in these ways: (a) the degree to which they are involved with educational and schooling matters either as stated in their organizational purpose or exhibited by their activities or possibly both; (b) where the payment for the membership comes from, either through an institutional membership, through

an institutional reimbursement for the membership, or by some subsidy, grant, or contract; (c) the organization's particular focus and opportunity to influence issues regionally, nationally, and transnationally, because of its affiliation with a particular cause, program, or educational purpose; and (d) the status of the organization as a professional or nonprofessional entity aside from having advocacy interests in schooling and curriculum matters. Consider these four characteristics as indicators for screening the schooling or curriculum interests or broader educational claims of organizations. The most problematic category and one that is engaging scholarly attention across disciplines (Ginsburg, 1998) is that of the NGO. Nellie Stromquist (2002), in her book *Education in a Globalized World*, offers some useful and cutting-edge views. Meredith Honig's (2004) studies of what she calls "intermediate organizations" and their effect on policy making and planning seem a parallel conceptualization. The practical matter of how this categorical conception might help you decipher claims and categorize organizations yourself is illustrated in Figure 9.4, where the indicators have been used to

Figure 9.4 Profiling Organizational Categories and Characteristics

<i>Category and Example</i>	<i>Characteristics^a</i>
Quasi-Governmental: Council of Chief State School Officers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stated educational curriculum purposes 2. State funding provided directly 3. State and national influence 4. Professional and political closed membership
Interstate Education Agents: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stated educational purposes with special interests as the name implies 2. Varied funding, some personal and some paid for as work related among midlevel management people in school districts and state departments of education 3. National originally as a division of the NEA but now a stand-alone organization 4. Professional emphasis but open membership
Nongovernmental Organizations: American Red Cross	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educational interests are peripheral to its disaster and relief missions 2. Congressional charter and some financial grant/contract support but not for membership 3. Transnational, national, state, and local affiliates 4. Nonprofessional orientation with its own workforce

a. 1. Purposes, 2. Membership funding, 3. Levels of interest, 4. Professional status

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characterize several well-known organizations. The NGO category is the most unsettled because it has been used mostly to describe transnational entities and only recently to include regional and national organizations (Ginsburg, 1998). Considering the examples and the indicators should help you to home in on and assess organizations as to their curriculum and schooling interests.

Quasi-Governmental Organizations

Quasi-governmental entities are organizations that take their membership from those who are elected to or employed by governments. You may recall earlier references to the National Governors Association or the Council of Chief State School Officers. The former is an organization of governors of the various states who meet yearly to discuss problems of mutual interest, educational issues being among the most significant. The Council of Chief State School Officers is a national organization for state superintendents of education or their equivalent. Obviously, they are concerned with schools and schooling. There are also other organizations for representatives of state legislatures, judges in state court systems, and other governmental workers. Funding for their organizational membership is usually provided by the state and viewed as a legitimate function in support of the office they hold or the state work they do. These organizations maintain permanent staff headed by an executive director and perform valuable services for the membership, including performing research, collecting and maintaining a database, and conducting liaison activities. For example, the National Governors Organization has been very influential in developing and supporting the National Assessment of Educational Progress and coordinating with the various national standards projects in the continuing school reform movement. The U.S. Secretary of Education and often the president of the United States attend the annual sessions of the National Governors Organization. At the meeting in 2004, many governors expressed concerns about the impact of national policies on the states, particularly the costs and application of stringent regulations encountered under the 2001 NCLB law. These sessions afford governors an opportunity to express their particular partisan views and obtain national exposure on critical schooling issues; both are powerful incentives for membership.

Interstate Education Agents and NGOs

The designation *Interstate Education Agent (IEA)* is a neutral term used to refer to other organizations outside specific government or quasi-governmental standing that can be either regional or national in their scope of activity and their memberships. This also differentiates those national agents and agencies from others called *NGOs*; the term is often used to refer to noneducational and humanitarian agencies such as the American

Red Cross in the larger national and international scene and sometimes to educational organizations like UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural organization, that also operate at that level. Using either term, IEA or NGO, suggests the organization's purpose is to act on behalf of the membership in the realm of activities related to the organization's stated purposes, particularly those having some educational component as part of their overall mission. Many of the IEA organizations are nonprofit and professional. The International Reading Association is, as its title suggests, an affiliation of various international reading association professionals in a variety of countries. The National Society for the Study of Education is another example, one that is strictly a national entity. As a national American organization of academics and related scholars, its interests are in the various aspects of education, particularly what happens in schools. These IEAs and NGOs provide important publications about things educational and are not particularly advocates for any cause, their interests being in presenting various scholarly viewpoints or reviews of research, the many sides of a topic, about some issue or activity. Other organizations, like the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), are national organizations of a more specific professional focus that draw membership from a variety of groups (e.g., midlevel district curriculum specialists, academics with curriculum and supervision interests, and state department administrators). This does not mean the organizations are exclusive in their purpose or membership; they are interested in anything that affects schooling but view issues from the organization's particular perspective. The American Association of School Administrators, for example, might have a position statement on improving science curriculum in schools. So will the ASCD and the National Science Teachers Association. Each organization's statement will reflect and advocate the concerns of their constituency, as the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Rifle Association might about gun control. If the organization's purposes are studied, the particular perspective on schooling and educational matters should be evident.

Membership funding sources also vary with the interstate education agents. Although some members might be from governmental agencies, others might be corporate, personal, business, religious, or some combination of those. Funding for a membership will also come from diverse sources, sometimes personal, often corporate or business related, sometimes from for-profit organizations, and sometimes from nonprofits. School districts often provide memberships for specific administrators but usually not for teachers. The latter may receive financial support to attend conferences related to specific curriculum interests that the district can justify for meeting specific curriculum needs. Another characteristic of these IEA and NGO agents is their common interest in or an advocacy for schools and schooling, curriculum, and higher education, or something else educational. Their interest is not fleeting but sustaining; they are interested in the long term, in monitoring the curriculum in general as the ASCD might, or in particular, as the Council on Basic Education has in arts and humanities or as the International Reading Association might in reading. Each school curriculum area is

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represented by a national organization. The National Council of Teachers of Math, National Council for the Social Studies, and National Science Teachers Association are examples. Each agent monitors national, state, and regional policy initiatives, development of textbooks, resource materials, and the particular controversies about what the curriculum should contain related to their particular interests. They provide monographs, journals, summaries of research, and other publications for their members and engage in lobbying activities with other like-minded organizations seeking to influence policy making and planning. They have traditionally offered model curriculum plans, the ideal curriculum of lofty aims, purposes, and cutting-edge content. Today, these plans include suggestions and rubrics for creating the path between classroom curriculum and the standards the curriculum is planned to meet.

Standards and the Bully Pulpit

One of the interesting features of the federal involvement in education in general and schooling in particular is the role of the president. Few presidents have been more closely tied with the use of the office of President to promote a national agenda than Theodore and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The term *bully pulpit* represents the use of the office as a pulpit to “preach” a message to the people and “bully” the congress into accepting a policy idea of the president and passing laws to authorize further policy making and planning in the executive branch or other designated agents (see, e.g., Glantz, 2004). As you will recall from Chapter 7, much of the discussions about educational matters in the 19th and 20th centuries took place inside and around the various bureaus and affiliates of the NEA. The demise of the NEA as a national forum has forced presidents to find different paths, such as convening a national forum to highlight and energize a presidential agenda. Theodore Roosevelt used this kind of forum to convene a study of the “economy of time” in the early 20th century. The current standards movement is the result of presidential use of the bully pulpit to convene a national conference and promote an agenda. In 1989, President George Herbert Walker Bush joined with the nation’s governors to convene the first meeting out of which the standards movement sprung. With an invitational list of politicians and business and labor leaders, and a sprinkling of academics, college presidents, and school leaders, including such luminaries as Louis Gerstner, the CEO of IBM as its titular chair, that meeting was the jump-start for the standards movement that today permeates the national, state, and local district agenda and garners a vast allocation of resources. The offspring of that meeting include the quasi-governmental National Educational Goals Panel and the National Council on Education Standards and Testing. In 1994, Congress passed the Goals 2000 legislation establishing the National Education Standards and Improvement Council, all steps toward establishing a national policy that culminated in the NCLB of 2001. Parallel with those developments

were the gradual involvement of the 50 different states as designated standards agents, and standards promulgated by or influenced by various academic and curriculum content organizations such as the National Council of Teachers of Math and the American Historical Association. Diane Ravitch developed a public-user-friendly guide, *National Standards in American Education: A Citizen's Guide* (1995), to help popularize and build support for the movement. As Stotsky's book *What's at Stake in the K-12 Standards Wars* (2000) suggests, the matter of standards is contentious, and agreeing on a unified course is difficult at best. One of the few studies of the standards-based reforms is Swanson and Stevenson's article, "Standards-Based Reform in Practice: Evidence on State Policy and Classroom Instruction From the NAEP State Assessments" (2002). As the title suggests, the standards-curriculum-instruction-assessment relationship is at the heart of the standards discussions, and progress toward standards-based curriculum work is subject to contesting views and diverse expert opinions.

Summary and Conclusions

All curriculum work, regardless of the kind of activities carried on or the level at which they occur, ultimately is a response to or impetus for some policy-making and planning actions. Various actors are involved, ranging from specific people in particular roles to important state, regional, national, and international organizations and groups. These agents may include state workers such as legislators, state board of education members, and governors, and organizations dedicated to both general and particular curriculum interests like the American Enterprise Institute, the American Educational Research Association, and the National Science Foundation. Forming policy and giving it expression in a plan precede and frame the activities creating curriculum. Even though those activities about curriculum will be dispersed, the results will ultimately be found in the classroom. The linking of policy making and planning to classroom teacher use suggests the next aspect of exploring curriculum, the matter of creating and managing the curriculum that follows from curriculum policy and planning work. In curriculum, curriculum policy making and planning work might seem to loom large in the national and regional arena, and less so in the local district, school, and classroom. It may seem that way, but the political realities of policy making (e.g., standards), especially where money follows, suggest it is otherwise. Policy making for schools and curriculum may well be primarily the province of the individual state, but the presence of and pressure from the multitude of quasi-governmental, interstate educational, and nongovernmental agents exerts a powerful influence on what controls what the teachers teach, the curriculum.

Critical Perspective

1. Control through authorized policy making is often portrayed as being under local control, that is to say, operationally local in and subject to the will of the community. Does this mean the state grants or cedes power to a local school board to make policy? Or, is the range of authorized policy making controlled by the state, usually the legislature? What is the meaning of “local control” in your state?
2. Probably the most important recent law creating policy and prompting policy-making actions is the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. What law preceded the NCLB? What differences are there between the old law and policy and the new?
3. What are the key provisions of the NCLB? What policy-making activities were incurred at the federal level? Were the states required to formulate any policy or do any policy making?
4. Given the information developed in 1 and 2 above, consider each of the characteristics of effective policy making and briefly formulate a statement of how and in what way each characteristic was addressed.
5. It often seems that school reform and standards go hand in hand. That is not always the case. School reform has included separate elements such as improving reading programs and urban high school reform. What other kinds of programs or issues are there under the school reform umbrella?
6. Not all forces for reform are governmental. Various kinds of quasi-governmental and interstate agents are also working in reform. Identify some of those organizations and agents that can be found in your locale, state, and region.
7. In your state, what is the law concerning the role of the legislature and state department of education in curriculum and reform efforts? Select another state and identify the roles of each. Are there similarities and differences? Are responsibilities or restrictions spelled out about roles?
8. One of the complaints raised about the standards movement is the increase in paperwork required of teachers on the one hand and the lack of input from the classroom and school level on the other. If you are a practicing teacher, what are your views? It might be useful to casually sample others teaching in different schools and at different levels to find out what they think of standards and what positive or negative views they hold. You might form a small group, develop a simple set of questions, and use them for interviewing other teachers or non-school individuals.

Resources for Curriculum Study

1. The concept of local control of schooling is often cited in arguing power relationships between local, state, and federal authority. Among education historians, Joel Spring in *American Education* (2004) provides a useful discussion. Students interested in this very American idea of local control should read two articles by Goldin and Katz in the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (1999a) and the *Journal of Economic Perspectives* (1999b) that provide interesting insights into the idea and offer factual evidence of it in practice through interpretation of rather than clear and specific grants of authority.
2. Reforms often take unplanned paths, even when a pattern seems evident to follow. D. A. Squires, in *Aligning and Balancing the Standards-Based Curriculum* (2004), offers some insights into the policy-planning mix.
3. Collections of policy development and planning studies, the linkages between national assessments and policy making, for example, are slow to develop because the studies are mainly underway and unreported. One example of those kinds of studies is Swanson and Stevenson's article (2002) "Standards-Based Reform in Practice: Evidence on State Policy and Classroom Instruction From the NAEP State Assessments." While of more interest to the technical professional and academics, this article and others can be found in the American Educational Research Association journal, *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, an excellent resource and avenue to other studies and materials.
4. Reform that leads to policy making, planning, and implementation of activities in the name of reform is often interpreted in different ways. M. R. Berube (1994) offers an interesting account of reform from 1883 to 1983. Diane Ravitch, in her book *Left Behind: A Century of Battles on School Reform* (2000), covers much the same ground but from a different perspective.
5. One of the marks of the thoughtful scholar is the persistence in studying a topic and exploring it from different perspectives. Michael Fullan (2001) is an excellent example in the study of leadership. In studies of school reform, Andrew Porter's work is always worthy of consideration. His article "National Standards and School Improvement in the 1990s: Issues and Promise," in the *American Journal of Education* (1994), is some 10 years distant yet prescient in anticipating current discussions of school reform and curriculum.
6. Articles and books that specifically address curriculum reform are few. One thoughtful exception is S. T. Hopmann's article "On the Evaluation of Curriculum Reforms" (2003) in the *Journal of Curriculum Studies*. This journal is an excellent

resource for articles, and the table of contents can be accessed online by typing in the name of the journal.

7. *Culture* is perhaps an overused word that has lost the precision that anthropologist Franz Boaz intended. Today you find it used in different ways, such as the culture of poverty, the culture of war, or the culture of policy making. What culture implies both in anthropology and its other applications is a bounded set of particulars, ideals, manners, modes of thought, costumes, and the like that configure a way of behaving. Applied to policy making, it frames the activities and behaviors of policy makers in both a collective and individual sense; culture mirrors the context in policy making and planning. In *The Culture of Education Policy*, S. J. Stein (2004) captures the context and range of behaviors in policy work. Policy-making culture in context, the urban school reform one, is the subject of F. M. Hess's book *Spinning Wheels* (1998).
8. The tentacles of reform spread wide in the school-state-federal relationship. Whether it is school reform per se or standards, or a mix of the two, the relationships it spawns are tenuous and contentious. There are many angles to explore, and F. M. Hess's *The Economics of Schooling and School Quality* (2004), Cohen and Hill's *Learning Policy* (2001), and Tom Loveless's article "Uneasy Allies: The Evolving Relationship of School and State" (1998) are useful starting points.
9. Among the quasi-governmental agents, several offer excellent materials about various aspects of school reform and development of standards. The Internet sites for the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers are both outstanding. Each tries to be nonpartisan and provide leads to other agencies and organizations. Both are readily accessible by typing in their respective titles.
10. The standards movement is in many ways as Engel's title suggests, *The Struggle for Control of Public Education: Market Ideology Vs. Democratic Values* (2000), a matter of power and control—school governance and who governs sets the agenda and approach to standards. A good resource on governance is D. Conley's *Who Governs Our Schools?* (2003).

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