

KANSAS CITY MISSOURI SCHOOL DISTRICT

DESEGREGATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

April 29, 1985

SUBMITTED BY STATE DEFENDANTS

CLERK U.S. DISTRICT COURT

Exhibits:

P 3762 D _____

Case No. 77-0420-CV-W4

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INTRODUCTION, SUMMARY, AND RATIONALE

A. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

From an educational standpoint, a desegregation plan that has the highest probability of initial and sustained success should be based on an explicit rationale and set of stated principles. These principles aid in selecting the most productive components--those which efficiently accomplish the purposes set forth by the Court, while also avoiding faddish, unproven, unrelated, and needlessly expensive components that are unlikely or unnecessary to accomplish the fundamental purposes. When set forth explicitly, these principles may be evaluated by the interested parties; and the components of the plans may be weighed according to their conformity to the principles.

The present plan follows from ten principles. They overlap somewhat, but each has distinctive value that requires consideration. They are as follows:

1. EFFECTIVENESS

The plan must effectively accomplish the orders of the Court; more specifically, it must create a unitary school district through maximum desegregation and through improvement of the academic achievement of black children.

2. DIRECTEDNESS

The plan must be directed at those found to be harmed--racially isolated black children. It should not be directed for the benefit of educational professionals, the general community, black children in integrated schools or white children, although it may help but not harm such children. Nor should it be directed at general improvements in education, which must be accomplished by other state and district programs and funding.

3. ADMINISTRATION

The State should not run the local school district. However, it has the responsibility to provide special expertise and experience, and appropriate oversight and monitoring to help ensure the plan's success.

4. CONSENSUS

Insofar as possible educational components advocated by all parties--the plaintiffs, the district, and the State should be given highest priority.

5. APPROPRIATENESS

Components that have a record of continuing success in the district or State should be selected or expanded.

7. COMPATIBILITY

The components selected should fit together and complement each other. A miscellaneous list of unrelated programs is likely to add only administrative complexity and confusion where it is least tolerable.

8. EFFICIENCY

The state has an obligation to employ tax funds in the most productive manner and to avoid diverting them to programs that do not accomplish the purposes of the Court's Order. Likewise, state revenues must not be expended in a manner that unfairly favors one district over another. The district must avoid wasting children's time on unworkable or unproven programs and those in which it has neither expertise nor experience.

9. FOCUS

The resources of the Plan should be concentrated on the enhancement of desegregation and on the chief agents of education and learning--children, teachers, and parents--and not on indirect administrative services and other educationally peripheral matters.

10. SPECIFICITY

To be enacted and monitored, the Plan must be detailed. It should include names and roles of responsible agents, materials required, activities to be conducted, dates of major events, and an itemized budget for each component.

B. THE PLAN IN BRIEF

The Plan is comprised of four components:

1. A carefully-drawn transportation arrangement that will encourage the maximum amount of racial desegregation while accommodating, to the extent possible, the desires of black and white parents to choose the schools that their children attend, including the ones nearest to their homes.
2. A coordinated set of educational components that will raise the quality, quantity, and effectiveness of instruction throughout the KCMSD elementary and secondary schools. The components include: a proven technique of instruction called "mastery learning"; rigorous use of testing results to monitor student progress; a program for preschool children to provide an academic headstart where needed; and extended-day kindergarten and extended-year summer school to expand school time where appropriate.

The districtwide remedy will include: a comprehensive parent involvement program that will be implemented to build a strong coalition between the three chief agents of education--teachers, children, and parents--and to help promote educationally stimulating activities in the bulk of children's waking hours that are spent outside school.

3. The state Plan also sets forth programs to be implemented only in schools that remain more than 90+ percent black. These will include a reduction in class size, the addition of any necessary counselors, after-school programs, and secondary education programs.
4. The state, on a one-time basis, will match up to \$10 million raised by the KCMSD to improve its facilities.
5. A monitoring committee of KCMSD and State Department of Education staff will be formed to monitor the implementation of the Plan and to report quarterly to the Court.

C. THE PLAN RATIONALE

1. STUDENT TRANSFERS

It is well-known (and indeed is reflected in this Court's Order) that substantial majorities of black and white parents resist arbitrary and compulsory transportation away from the nearest neighborhood school simply for the purpose of racial desegregation. They feel alienated by the process. As a result, those who are economically able to do so, may abandon the public school system altogether.

Nevertheless, thirty years of constitutional precedent has firmly established that segregated schools are, pro tanto, unequal and constitutionally unacceptable. A desegregation plan must seek to provide desegregation, though within a workable framework, of course. Though it must squarely face--and then address-- the concerns of white and black parents, it must also call for some measure of mandatory student transfers if desegregation is to be more than nominal.

Striking the right balance between the need to desegregate and the need to attend to fears shared by all races is far from easy. Mechanically applied, compulsory insensitive racial mixing, effected through a readjustment of boundaries and the peremptory reassignment of students according to statistical criteria only, will achieve only the most fleeting "desegregation." It may soon be answered by middle-class (often mostly white) flight that reestablishes the racial isolation that the student transfers were intended to cure.

For these reasons, the state is continuing to develop a student transfer plan that is considerably more flexible (and that is therefore three times more expensive for the state) than a program that simply transfers the smallest number of students needed to achieve a uniform racial composition. This is a difficult and expensive process; it involves elaborate computer simulations and calculations; and it is time-consuming. The full development of the student transfer plan will eventually require full cooperation from the other parties in this litigation, as well as additional guidance from this Court.

2. EDUCATIONAL COMPONENTS

The Plan starts with a number of programs designed to be implemented districtwide. These programs will provide an opportunity for quality education for every student in the KCMSD. The justification for system-wide components in the plan comes from the relocation of formerly isolated students throughout the system.

To the extent that black children are educationally harmed by racial isolation--be it for psychological or other reasons--the harm will be remedied at least in part by desegregation. That segregation alone causes "educational harm" continues to be a controversial question; that desegregation alone remedies that particular harm is even more uncertain. Nevertheless, such educational harms are certainly possible, and other districts undergoing desegregation have routinely assumed that they do occur. It is, therefore, appropriate to include a number of properly targeted educational programs in a desegregation plan.

The state's Plan offers a coordinated set of educational components. If implemented fully and in good faith by all parties, these components should more than suffice to remedy government-imposed harms to racially isolated black children. This interrelated system of educational components will increase learning. The components include: a proven technique of instruction called "mastery learning," rigorous use of testing results to monitor student progress, a program for parents to give their preschoolchildren an academic headstart, extended-day kindergarten, and extended-year summer school. It also includes some reduction in class size, after-school programs and secondary education programs. As a set, these components increase the quality and effectiveness of instruction.

The educational components emphasizing mastery learning, instructional management, basic skills, early childhood development, parental involvement, reduction in class size, after-school programs and secondary education programs, and lengthening learning time are not only proposed by the state but by the KCMSD as well. Such programs are not only supported by research but are also highly regarded by many educators today. They are being put in place by school boards and state legislators around the country. Even though the research compilations and syntheses that solidly and objectively support such programs are relatively recent, the programs have been used for decades in public schools. These programs deserve the Court's closest attention.

These programs are not exotic. They gain their success by organizing instruction and intensifying its quality. Mastery learning entails clearly specifying the goals of learning, developing or choosing the most appropriate lessons, giving each child sufficient time to master his or her goals, closely monitoring the child's progress, giving praise or other reinforcements for success, and providing encouragement and corrective feedback when errors are made. It is particularly suitable in desegregation where children of mixed

Early childhood programs, a lengthened day in kindergarten, and summer school in other grades may be thought of as additional ways of extending the amount of opportunity for learning. The emphasis on preschoolers and kindergarten provides the additional advantage of giving racially isolated black children a headstart in school.

It is important to realize the components of the State Plan are concentrated on providing direct educational services by teachers for children. The Plan specifically avoids the pervasive tendency for additional administration, complexity, and unproven programs which often interfere with the primary purposes of education and a meaningful desegregation effort.

The selection of these particular remedial programs is supported by exhaustive statistical studies that draw on a large body of empirical research. These certain educational techniques, which increase the quality and effectiveness of instruction and academic stimulation in the home, produce significant effects on academic learning. Estimates of the academic gain achieved through mastery learning or its components, for example, range from 8 to 12 months. Estimates of the benefits of systematically assigned and graded homework are, respectively, 3 and 8 months of academic gain. Home-stimulation programs not as extensive as those planned by the State have yielded estimates of 5 months of academic improvement. Increased time on learning by extending the school day and year yields an estimated 4 months of academic improvement.

Generally speaking all these components have not been implemented at the same time nor studied over the course of years. It cannot be definitively said that they enhance one another's effects. If they merely avoid interference, and add to one another, a conservative estimate of their combined effect is 20 months of academic gain. Conceivably, the combined effect might be as high as an estimated 29 months of academic gain.

The long-term effects of the separate educational components have not been studied, largely because their impressive effects have not been compiled until recently. Indeed, in the past, educational practice depended on opinions and fads more than on research findings or studies. Nevertheless, further academic gains can reasonably be expected from sustained programs. The important point is that the components proposed by the State have an excellent record of immediate effects, and are likely to yield an accelerated pace of learning for as long as they remain in effect.

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3. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The state Plan also has a major parental involvement program. There is a potential for striking effects on learning from such a program. Its chief value is to bring about a parent-teacher partnership to directly expand and intensify the child's learning experiences in the large percentage of time spent outside school. Like intensification and expansion of learning time in school, such programs make the child's experience more educationally fruitful. Increasing the amount of homework is one example. Other examples are reducing of the nationally-estimated 30 hours of television students watch each week, and expanding leisure reading and other academically and culturally stimulating activities.

Parents are the child's first teachers. They can be encouraged and given the means to alter the "curriculum of the home." This curriculum refers to informed parent-child conversations about school and everyday events; encouragement and discussion of leisure reading; monitoring and joint critical analysis of television viewing and peer activities; deferral of immediate gratifications to accomplish long-term, human-capital goals; and expressions of interest in the child's academic and other progress as a person.

These efforts can be enhanced by seeking to get parents more involved with the schools and teachers themselves. To accomplish this, parents are typically invited into the schools. They may be given information about their children's progress. They may also be given academic materials and activities, related to the school curriculum or not, which promote their children's learning outside school.

Research conclusions from almost 30 studies in the past decade show that 91 percent of the time, children benefitted significantly from such parental involvement.

4. OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING

The state should have a substantial role in overseeing this Plan. The state has been held accountable for the negative effects on education and should be accountable for proper and correct development and implementation of each component.

BUDGET SUMMARY

I. Student Assignment	
Professional Data Processing	\$ 5,690,354
Transportation	
II. Districtwide Programs	
1. Instructional Management System and Basic Skills Curriculum	2,693,720
2. Testing and Accountability	93,100
3. Early Childhood/Parent Education	1,223,348
4. Extended Day Kindergarten	1,086,037
5. Extended Year/Summer School	329,100
6. Comprehensive Parent Involvement	1,439,272
7. AAA Classification	3,263,652
III. Programs in Remaining 90+ Percent Black Schools	
1. Reduction in Class Size	3,180,165
2. Counselors - Budgeted or Part of AAA	712,000
3. After-School Programs	104,400
4. Secondary Education Programs	742,500
IV. Monitoring	<u>105,000</u>
Total for Operations	\$20,662,648
V. Facilities (one time cost)	<u>\$20,000,000</u>
Grand Total	\$40,662,726