

## CONCEPT OF THE STRONG OFFICE OF EDUCATION FIELD OFFICE

### I. Authorities.

- a. Each regional office would be under the direction of an Office of Education Regional Director who would be directly responsible to the Commissioner and would have full line authority over all members of the Office of Education regional staff in his region. (No change is proposed in regard to the authority and responsibility of the HEW Regional Director.)
- b. The Office of Education Regional Director would be responsible for the execution of all OE functions assigned to the field and would represent the Commissioner to the education community and to the public generally. Such authority would be exercised within the scope of delegations and consistent with Office of Education policy, plans, and technical guidance.

### II. Functions.

In addition to the functions now assigned to the field, the Regional Director would carry out such functions as the following:

- a. For OC or OE generally
  1. The following have been assigned previously but have not really been performed effectively
    - (a) Appraisal of educational needs
    - (b) Recommending programs or policies
    - (c) Expressing the position of OE on matters of settled policy
  2. Assigned functions which have been performed minimally
    - (a) "Eyes and ears," including reporting of problems
    - (b) Provide services in areas not covered by specialists, e.g., civil rights compliance investigation
  3. Not yet assigned, but desirable and feasible
    - (a) Evaluation of OE programs
    - (b) Authority for negotiating certain grants or contracts (perhaps limited by type or amount)



- (c) Dissemination of information, e.g., on new programs, policies or regulations; announcement of grants, awards, contracts, etc.
- (d) Supervision and direction of all Bureau and Division regional representatives
- (e) Civil defense adult education, possibly
- (f) Liaison with OEO regional offices
- (g) Advice on relation between Economic Opportunity Act and Title I
- (h) Civil rights technical assistance

**NOTE:** The performance of 3.(b) and (c) - authority and information dissemination - is the best way (and perhaps the only way) to equip the OE Regional Representative to serve effectively the "eyes and ears" function - 2.(a).

**b. For the Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education**

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- (a) Title I - advice, information and assistance particularly in those states having limited resources
- (b) Title II - same, with possibility for approving annual projections in second year and thereafter
- (c) Title III - review, evaluation and recommendation of proposals
- (d) Advice and assistance concerning aid to State educational agencies under Title I and, possibly, Title V.

**2. State grants**

- (a) Expand representation (now in San Francisco only)

**c. For the Bureau of Research**

**1. Cooperative and other research programs**

- (a) Advice and assistance to institutions; assistance to OE headquarters in locating and evaluating prospective researchers



d. For the National Center for Educational Statistics

1. Data sources and standards

- (a) Advice and assistance concerning Title X of NDEA grants
- (b) Expedite submissions of data to OE and interpret and "sell" OE statistical programs

e. For Bureau of Adult and Vocational Education

1. Vocational education

- (a) Expansion underway

2. Library services and adult education

- (a) Advice and assistance, review and possibly approve basic education grants

f. For the Bureau of Higher Education

1. Facilities

- (a) Expansion underway, possibly should extend to approval of certain grants

2. NDEA loans, Work Study and fellowships

- (a) Possibly authorize approval in the field

3. CU exchange and AID training

- (a) Identify and evaluate institutions
- (b) Assist in negotiations

4. AID and international organization recruiting

- (a) Locate and evaluate candidates

III. Lines of authority and working relations.

- a. The Commissioner would provide policy guidance, approve objectives, assign resources, and approve those portions of the Office-wide and bureau plans which are to be executed by the OE Regional Directors.



b. Directors of headquarters offices and bureaus, in accordance with the functions suggested under II above, would:

1. Recommend which portions of their annual plans should be executed in the regions and the resources required and provide budgetary support for such resources;
2. Establish technical standards, procedures, and guidance for such execution and provide related technical direction to the Regional Directors and their staffs;
3. On behalf of the Commissioner and within established Office policy and approved plans, address to the Regional Directors any directives or communications which convey policy guidance or require the expenditure of significant resources;
4. With respect to directives reflecting changes in Office policy or significant deviations from approved plans, send them to the Regional Directors through the Commissioner or after clearance with him;
5. Arrange for their staff to communicate directly with regional program specialists in providing technical guidance on how actions shall be performed, interpretations of program standards, and in seeking information. Regional program specialists would inform their Regional Directors of all significant communications.

c. Regional Directors

1. Would participate in the development of the annual operating plan and recommend segments which can be performed at the field level and will participate in its evaluation.
2. Inform the appropriate Bureau or Office Director(s) or the Commissioner of office or bureau directives or actions which may create inter-program conflict or difficulty and could, at their discretion, delay execution of action until the conflict is resolved at OE headquarters.
3. Would have full line authority over all field employees in their regions and would
  - (a) Assign work in a manner which would best use available skills and balance workload (consistent with approved plans for staffing the various agency programs at the field level);



- (b) Select all employees below the level of GS-13;
  - (c) Nominate, and with the concurrence of appropriate office or bureau chiefs, select all specialists in grades GS-13 and 14; and
  - (d) Nominate all staff generalists in grades GS-13 and 14, and all GS-15 employees; these shall be selected by the Commissioner.
- d. This concept assumes that the Regional Director reports directly to the Commissioner and would be free to communicate with him, formally or informally, on any matter which he thinks merits the attention of the Commissioner. The latter in turn would maintain similar direct and close relations with the Regional Directors. As a matter of practice, most communications would be between the Regional Directors and bureau heads on program matters. A Special Assistant for Field Activities would support the Commissioner in regard to his responsibilities for top level or cross program matters. The Special Assistant would assist in working out Washington level problems for them. The Regional Directors would visit Washington on special problems and participate in quarterly program development and evaluation conferences. In these latter cases, they would participate with the bureau heads as key officials of the Office of Education. The Commissioner should visit each regional office as circumstances require but probably on an average of once or more per year.
- e. In order to make this concept work, the assignment of high quality staff must go hand-in-hand with the expansion of functions. The Commissioner must be prepared to participate in the recruitment and to select personally the new Regional Directors. The expanded authorities and functions should be assigned region-by-region, as the program dictates and only as the new Directors are appointed. The Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner must also be prepared to devote extra attention to the development of the field program during the transition period.